

Tacos? Pizza? Coke? Beer?

What can nursing moms eat?



What if I don't eat a balanced diet?

Eating poorly affects your health, but *not* your milk. To feel your best, eat a variety of healthy foods each day. But even when you don't, your milk is still good.

What about hot, spicy or gassy foods?

Enjoy your food! Most babies tolerate whatever mom eats. Some babies are sensitive to certain foods such as milk and dairy products. If something you eat disagrees with your baby, avoid it. Otherwise, eat whatever you want.

Can babies be allergic to their mothers' milk?

No! But, a baby can be allergic to something the mother eats. If your health care provider says that your baby has an allergy to something such as milk or peanuts, avoid eating that food. (It can take a week or more before you see any change.) Breastfed babies can get allergies, but not as many or as severe as with formula feeding. And, if you have a family history of allergies, breastfeeding helps protect your baby.

Can I go on a diet?

While nursing, you may not need to go on a diet. You can lose weight slowly by nursing and eating sensibly. Eat foods in moderation. Going on a crash diet may decrease your milk supply.

What about coffee, tea and sodas with caffeine?

Too much caffeine could make your baby fussy and irritable. Limit caffeinated drinks to 2 servings each day. One serving of coffee or tea = 8 ounces. One serving of cola = 16-24 ounces. Caffeine-free drinks are OK.

What about herbal remedies and teas?

Some herbal remedies are not compatible with nursing, such as kava-kava, senna leaf, comfrey and peppermint oil. A few are considered compatible (fenugreek, blessed thistle and echinacea). Before using any herbal remedy, always discuss with your doctor. Herbal remedies can cause side effects and interact with medications or certain medical conditions. Use herbal teas purchased at the grocery store in moderation. Some contain caffeine. Others, such as peppermint tea, can reduce milk supply if consumed in large amounts.

What about a beer with my pizza?

One small drink per day has not been found to be harmful to the baby. To be safe, wait 2 hours so the alcohol has time to clear from the milk. Two small drinks per day *MAY* be OK provided mothers space them apart by 2 hours. (Small women would be better to wait 3 hours for the alcohol to clear). If a mother decides to have several drinks in a row, she needs to wait 2 to 3 hours for each drink consumed. Milk pumped right after drinking should be discarded because the alcohol stays in the milk even if left in the refrigerator. Women who have two or more drinks per day should not breastfeed! Recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics are more conservative: Avoid alcohol except for special occasions, limit it to one small, single drink and wait 2 hours before nursing.



Nursing does not have to change the way you eat.



Breastfeeding Awareness and Support Program
Healthy Baby Line
1-800-986-BABY



Pennsylvania WIC Program
1-800-WIC-WINS
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