

NUTRITION FOR YOU AND YOUR BABY

Breastfeeding can be the most beautiful and beneficial experience for you and your child. Most of us struggle to feel confident in the food choices we make for ourselves to support our breastfeeding journey. We doubt our milk supply and aren't always clear on when to feed and how. Not to mention that a rise in working mums and short maternity leaves don't help. Expressing at work can be uncomfortable, and the mum guilt is real! This resource will answer the most commonly asked questions on nutrition for you and your baby to allow you to feel confident in your food choices and feeding practices.



The importance of breastfeeding

Breastmilk contains the perfect balance of nutrients for your baby to ensure healthy growth and development. Breastfeeding your child gives them the foundation of a great immune system and reduces the risk of chronic diseases later in life. Not only is breastmilk great for your baby, but mum too! Breastfeeding reduces the risk of breast and ovarian cancers and obesity and stimulates your body to heal and repair after childbirth. The hormones you produce strengthen connections between you and your child.

The best diet to support breastfeeding and milk supply.

Ensuring you follow a balanced diet with foods from all the food groups is the best diet to support you and your child through this fantastic journey. Breastfeeding mothers need an additional 300-500 calories per day and about 2.7-3 litres of water to ensure their milk supply is adequate. This is more than you need during pregnancy. Stress impacts your milk supply significantly, so providing you rest when your baby does and having a solid support system is key to managing this. Looking after you and your amazing body will ensure your baby is well fed and happy. Naturally, you will see a significant increase in your appetite while breastfeeding, so remember to eat regularly and aim for three meals and three snacks throughout the day.



Key foods to help with milk supply

Above all, ensuring you are getting enough calories and hydration is key to an adequate milk supply. Managing stress is equally as important. It would help if you focused on incorporating some foods into your diet, such as protein-based foods and healthy fats. Fats are going to boost the calorie density of your milk. Additionally, some anecdotal evidence supports the use of fenugreek to increase milk supply. Soak the seeds in some water and pour over some ice for a refreshing drink or enjoy it hot as herbal tea.

Top 3 Nutrition Myths about Breastfeeding BUSTED !

The foods I eat will make my baby gassy

"Gassy" foods are termed that way as your body produces gas in your bowels as it digests these foods. Gas created in your bowel does not enter your baby's milk supply! The more likely cause is your baby swallowing excess air due to a poor latch, excess crying or other means.

You need to drink milk to make milk

If this one was true, cows would be struggling to keep up with the demand ! Breastmilk is made up of many nutrients and all foods contain the nutrients we need to make milk. They are broken down by our body and absorbed into our blood, where they are then used to produce breastmilk. So even an apple has a role to play!

You can't consume caffeine while breastfeeding

You can safely consume up to 200mg caffeine (2 cups of instant coffee) each day, without it affecting your baby. A small amount of caffeine does enter breast milk, but in moderation caffeine is okay. When in doubt, look at your baby for signs of fussiness and lower your intake accordingly.

Returning to your pre-baby weight

Breastfeeding burns a significant amount of calories, and so even the extra ones you are consuming are needed by your body. You will naturally lose weight after having a baby, and you should not be concerned about your weight for the first few months. We understand your desires, but hey, mama, you just had a baby, be kind to yourself! This is not the time to jump into a diet mindset. Instead, focus on recovery, getting used to less sleep, staying active and eating well! The weight loss will come and should be done healthily and at the right time to ensure your baby or milk supply doesn't pay the price!

Try this ! Super Satisfying breastfeeding snack

RECIPE: FLAXSEED & DATE SLICE

1/2 cup peanut butter
2 eggs
1 teaspoon Vanilla essence
1/2 cup chopped dates
1 cup wholemeal flour
1 cup oats
1/2 cup desiccated coconut
1/3 cup flaxseeds
1/4 cup honey
1/2 cup milk

You can throw in any kind of nuts/seeds/dried fruit or even muesli. Just remember to balance out the wet & dry ingredients. Combine all ingredients in a bowl and then press into a lined baking tray. Bake at 180 degrees Celsius for about 20min then melt dark choc or peanut butter on top & spread as a thin layer. Cool and cut into 4cm squares!

