

## Heathly Hints from Earth's Best Nutrition Necessities for Nursing Moms

\* **Fluid:** Nursing moms need at least 10 glasses of fluid a day. It can be water, herbal tea, milk, juice, decaf coffee, or seltzer. Without enough fluid, milk production may be compromised

\* **Calories:** A mother who is exclusively breast feeding needs an extra 640 calories per day, for the first six months. (National Academies Press, Nutrition During Lactation 1991. Institute of Medicine. Chapter 9, page 213). <http://darwin.nap.edu/books/0309043913/html/228.html> Get your extra calories from nutrient rich foods such as low fat dairy products, lean meats, whole grains, fruits and vegetables.

\* **Calcium:** It is difficult for many nursing moms to consume the RDA of 1,200 mg/day, especially if milk products are not a major part of the diet. A low intake of calcium will not affect the concentration of calcium in breast milk, but its effect on the mother's long-term bone density is uncertain, especially if the duration of breastfeeding is long. Include plenty of dairy products and calcium fortified juices in your daily diet.

\* **Vitamin B6:** Vitamin B6 levels in breast milk are strongly influenced by mother's intake. Low levels of B6 intake adversely affect both mom and baby. Vitamin B6 has many roles, including they synthesis of muscle protein and antibodies needed for a strong immune system. (The Tufts University Guide to Total Nutrition p 29) You don't need to add extra B6 to your diet, you just need to get the recommended daily intake of 2.1 mg/day. B6 can be found in variety of foods including meats, fish, nuts, beans, whole wheat products, and some fruits and vegetables. The best sources are enriched whole grain cereals, sunflower seeds, peanut butter, bananas, tuna, potatoes, white meat turkey and chicken.

\* **Thiamin:** Thiamin is also known as Vitamin B1. Thiamin is responsible for converting carbohydrates into energy. And because your energy intake (calories) is so much higher during pregnancy it makes sense that your thiamin requirements are also higher. Low intakes of thiamin by mom means low thiamin levels in breast milk. Be sure to get your recommended intake of 1.6 micrograms. The best sources of thiamin are whole grain products where the bran is retained as well as fortified whole grain cereals. Pork, peas and nuts are very good natural sources of Thiamin

\* **Folate:** Adequate folate intake is important to protect the health of both the mother and the infant. (National Academies Press p.228) Folate is important for cell division and tissue growth. It is also involved in the formation of hemoglobin in red blood cells. (Tufts University Guide to Total Nutrition p30.) A nursing woman needs 280 micrograms/day. Folate is abundant in green leafy vegetables, peas, oranges, carrots, eggs, bananas, avocado, whole wheat, fortified cereals and grains, and liver.

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