

Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women



Supporting a Healthy Foundation for Life



Dairy foods help people thrive across the lifespan – including the earliest stages. To help nourish a growing baby, pregnant and breastfeeding women need higher amounts of some nutrients including vitamin B12, iodine and choline, as well as fluids.^{1,2} However, many pregnant or breastfeeding women are falling short of the recommended three daily servings of dairy foods to help meet these fluid and nutrient needs during this time of development.¹

Dairy's Unique Contributions

Dairy foods provide important nutrients that help support a healthy pregnancy.



Vitamin B12 helps prevent deficiency that can lead to permanent neurological damage.³



Iodine helps prevent neurocognitive defects and lower childhood IQ.¹ During pregnancy, iodine needs increase over 50%. Iodine deficiency is the most preventable cause of intellectual disability.⁴ However, women who do not regularly consume dairy foods, eggs, seafood, or use iodized table salt, may not consume enough iodine to meet increased needs during pregnancy and lactation.¹ Also keep in mind, many prenatal supplements do not contain iodine, so it is important to read the supplement label.¹



Choline* can help replenish maternal stores and supports the healthy growth and development of baby's brain and spinal cord.¹

**One serving of milk provides 8% of the Daily Value for choline.*

Special Considerations



Contrary to conventional thinking, new or expecting moms do not need to restrict food and beverage choices to prevent food allergies in their baby.¹



Access to safe and nutritious foods can help support a lifetime of health and wellness for babies and moms alike. At around \$0.20 per 8-ounce serving, milk is an affordable source of iodine and other important nutrients.^{5,6,7}



Lactose intolerant? There are many lactose-free milk options on the market – it's real milk with all the same nutrients, just without the lactose. Additionally, many women with lactose intolerance can still tolerate some amount of lactose in their diet. For example, the good bacteria in yogurt helps break down lactose, making it easier to digest.



During pregnancy women should take special precautions not to consume unpasteurized milk or soft cheeses made from unpasteurized milk.¹



Try this Recipe

Overnight Rice Porridge – 3 Ways

Makes 3 servings

Ingredients:

- 2 cups cooked brown rice
- 1 1/3 cups low-fat or fat-free milk
- 1/4 tsp iodized salt
- Toppings of choice
 - Eggs, spinach, chicken breakfast sausage and cheese
 - Mushrooms, seaweed and scallions
 - Pomegranate seeds, walnuts and honey



Instructions:

1. Combine cooked brown rice, milk and salt in a container with a tight-fitting lid. Place in the refrigerator for 8 hours or overnight.
2. Transfer rice mixture to a saucepan placed over medium heat on the stovetop and bring to a boil. As soon as the mixture comes to a boil, reduce the temperature to low.
3. Simmer the porridge, stirring occasionally for 10-15 minutes, or until the mixture has thickened.
4. Serve immediately with toppings of choice.

Sources

- ¹ U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025. 9th Edition. December 2020.
- ² The National Academies of Science Engineering and Medicine. Dietary reference intakes: The essential guide to nutrient requirements. 2006.
- ³ National Institutes of Health Office of Dietary Supplements. Vitamin B12 fact sheet for consumers. 2021.
- ⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC's Second Nutrition Report – Iodine levels in young women border on insufficiency. 2012.
- ⁵ Drewnowski A. The contribution of milk and milk products to micronutrient density and affordability of the U.S. diet. *J Am Coll Nutr.* 2011;30(5 Suppl 1):422S-8S.
- ⁶ Hess J, Cifelli C, Agarwal S, Fulgoni V III. Comparing the cost of essential nutrients from different food sources in the American diet (OR20-04-19). *Curr Dev Nutr.* 2019;3(1).
- ⁷ IRI Multi Outlet + Conv 2020, YTD ending 10-4-20. Based on U.S. average price of unflavored, branded and private label milk, 1 gal.
- ⁸ U.S. Department of Agriculture. MyPlate. What foods are included in the Dairy Group? 2020.

Make Every Bite & Sip Count



Before, during and after pregnancy, women require much higher amounts of iodine to support baby's brain development. Adding milk or yogurt to recipes that typically call for water, like rice porridge, oatmeal or soups, is an easy way to boost daily iodine consumption.



New moms are often short on time and energy. Dairy foods can help. Whether it's grabbing a slice of cheese on-the-go or enjoying a cup of yogurt with berries while baby naps, dairy foods can easily fit into an unpredictable schedule.

Recommended Daily Dairy Servings^{1,8}

 3 cups



Milk, yogurt and cheese are foundational foods that help nourish people throughout life. Dairy foods, including lactose-free varieties, are highly nutritious and accessible options that help fill nutrient gaps and contribute to healthy eating patterns. To learn more about how dairy foods help people thrive across the lifespan, visit USDairy.com.

