

Emphasize

these

Nutrients

As a pregnant woman, your diet should focus on food sources that keep you and your baby as healthy as possible. That means consuming foods that have important nutrients, such as folic acid, calcium, vitamin D, protein, and iron.

Folate or Folic Acid

Folate (folic acid) helps prevent abnormalities of the brain and spinal cord and

decrease the risk of preterm delivery. You need 800 micrograms (mgs) of folate or folic acid a day throughout your pregnancy. Good sources include fortified cereals, leafy green vegetables, citrus fruits, peanuts, dried beans and peas. You may also ask your healthcare provider about taking a folic acid supplement.

Food	Serving Size	Folate or Folic Acid Content
Cereal	¾ cup 100% fortified cereal	100-700 mcg
Spinach	½ cup boiled	115 mcg
Beans	½ cup boiled Great Northern Beans	90 mcg
Asparagus	4 boiled spears	89 mcg
Oranges	1 orange	52 mcg

Calcium

You and your baby need calcium to fortify your bones and teeth, and they will regulate your circulatory, muscular, and nervous systems. As a pregnant woman, you will need 1,000 milligrams a day; pregnant teens need 1,300 milligrams a day. While dairy products are the best absorbed sources of calcium, nondairy sources such as broccoli, kale, spinach, salmon, and fortified cereals and juices are also beneficial.

Food	Serving Size	Calcium content
Cereal	1 cup calcium-fortified	3 to 1,000 mg
Juice	1 cup calcium-fortified orange juice	348 mg
Milk	1 cup skim	299 mg
Yogurt	6 oz. low-fat fruit yogurt	235 mg
Cheese	1 oz. part-skim mozzarella	222 mg
Salmon	3 oz. canned pink salmon with bones	181 mg
Spinach	½ cup boiled	145 mg

Vitamin D

Vitamin D promotes bone strength in your baby's bones and teeth by increasing your ability to absorb calcium. You should consume 600 IUs a day from sources like fatty fish like salmon, fortified milk and orange juice, or eggs.

Food	Serving Size	Vitamin D content
Fish	3 oz cooked sockeye salmon	447 IU
Milk	1 cup skim milk	115 IU
Juice	8 oz. calcium- and vitamin D-fortified orange juice	100 IU
Eggs	1 large hard-boiled egg	44 IU

Protein is crucial for your baby's development, particularly during the second and third trimesters. You should consume about 71 grams a day, from sources such as lean meat, poultry, fish and eggs; other options include lentils and peas, tofu, dairy products like cottage cheese, and peanut butter.

Protein

Food	Serving size	Protein content
Cottage cheese	1 cup low-fat, 1% milk cottage cheese	28 g
Poultry	3 oz. boneless, skinless grilled chicken breast	26 g
Fish	3 oz. canned pink salmon with bones	16.8 g
Lentils	½ cup boiled lentils	8.9 g
Milk	1 cup skim	8.3 g
Peanut butter	2 T smooth, vitamin- and mineral-fortified peanut butter	8.2 g
Eggs	1 large, hard-boiled	6.3 g

Iron

In order to produce enough hemoglobin during your pregnancy, you need to double your iron intake. This will accommodate the expansion of your blood volume and produce your baby's entire blood supply. Your baby will also need the iron supply in his or her liver several months after birth. Be sure to get 27 milligrams a day of iron, from lean red meat, poultry, and fish, fortified breakfast cereals, beans, and vegetables. Iron from animal products is most easily absorbed; in order to enhance the absorption of iron from plant sources or supplements, pair them with food or drink high in vitamin C (orange juice, tomato juice, strawberries). Calcium can decrease iron absorption.

Food	Serving Size	Iron content
Cereal	¾ cup 100 percent iron-fortified quick oats	29.7 mg
Beans	½ cup boiled kidney beans	2.9 mg
Spinach	½ cup boiled spinach	1/9 mg
Meat	3 oz. roasted lean beef tenderloin	2.6 mg
Poultry	3 oz. roasted dark turkey	.9 mg

Even if you have a healthy diet it's still possible to miss key nutrients. Therefore, taking a daily prenatal vitamin can help fill any gaps in your diet. If you follow very strict diets or have chronic health conditions, talk to your health care provider about special supplements. Do the same if you are considering herbal supplements.