

## *Setting Goals for Breastfeeding*

**B**reastmilk is all your baby needs for the first six months of life. No other food or drink is needed. Breastfeeding should continue until your baby is two years or older. You can introduce your baby to complementary foods at age 6 months.

Now is a good time to set some goals for breastfeeding. A goal is your purpose in doing something. Goals show clearly what you can expect to get out of something you are learning.

Why have your own goals for breastfeeding? You have the natural ability to breastfeed but must learn how to do it. By making your own goals for breastfeeding, you are helping yourself to learn what is involved.

You are also deciding how you're going to do it. By setting goals in advance, you can decide what you will need to help you achieve your goals.

### **Your prenatal goals for breastfeeding**

Here are some suggestions for breastfeeding goals. Think about them and then check off the ones you want to aim for.

- I will breastfeed my new baby.
- I will “build” my breastfeeding support group while I’m pregnant.
- I will find out about breastfeeding at the hospital where my baby will be born.
- I will tell the hospital staff that I plan to breastfeed my new baby.
- I will read about breastfeeding goals for my hospital stay (on page 76) and try to achieve them.
- I will develop a baby-feeding plan that requests that my baby not be given any bottle or pacifier (see page 77 for a sample).
- I will accept that breastfeeding may take time, patience, and determination to work.
- I will make the first few weeks a learning time for both my baby and myself.
- I will involve my partner in helping breastfeeding to work for our family.
- I will try to learn as much as possible about breastfeeding so I feel confident.
- I will try to quit smoking now.
- I will breastfeed our baby for as long as possible, because the benefits will continue as my baby grows.

**B**reastfeeding is nature's way to feed your baby, but that doesn't mean you know how to do it right away. Most mothers need information, support, and encouragement while breastfeeding, especially during the first month or so.

### **How can breastfeeding support help me?**

It's a good idea to think about breastfeeding support ahead of time and identify friends, family members, professionals, and support groups to help you.

- You'll have someone to talk with about breastfeeding your baby and to get help from, either in person or by telephone.
- You'll have a friendly shoulder to lean on any time of the day or night, and often it's most needed during the night!
- You'll have people checking on how you and your baby are doing, either in person or by telephone.
- You'll have help with some aspects of baby care, such as the support person taking the baby for a walk while you have a relaxing bath or looking after the baby while you have your hair cut.
- You'll have someone to help with making some meals, doing some housework, and perhaps even do some shopping.
- If you have other children, you'll have help in caring for them. Of course, it's a good idea to involve other children in ways appropriate to their age.
- You'll have someone to invite you, your baby, and the rest of your family for a meal or an outing.
- You'll have a sitter so you and your partner can go out.

Keep in mind that friends and family will offer advice, whether you ask for it or not. Some advice will be helpful, but you may find some of it confusing and contradictory. Listen politely, thank them, and don't be afraid to ignore their advice.

### **Who can help give breastfeeding support?**

The time to think about which people can help you in the early days of breastfeeding is during your pregnancy. Then you'll be ready when your baby is born!

- Find one or two mothers who have enjoyed breastfeeding their babies and who live near you. Talk to them about their experiences and ask if they will give you moral support or help with any challenge you might have when breastfeeding your baby.
- Talk with your partner about ways to share "the load" once your baby arrives.



- Find out if there is a breastfeeding support group where you live. Ask your public health nurse or check in your telephone book. Perhaps you'll want to join a group and learn from experienced breastfeeding mothers. Attend one or more of their meetings while you are pregnant.
- Look for other new mothers to talk with, trade child care, or give one another a break in ways that you both enjoy.
- Check to see if community groups, family resource centres, or churches in your neighbourhood have a parent-child drop-in centre, mother-baby groups, or exercise programs.
- Talk about breastfeeding with your public health nurse or nutritionist. Many Public Health Services office offer breastfeeding support in the community.

## *A Word to Partners*

**A**s the partner of a breastfeeding mother, you can be very much a part of the breastfeeding experience. While your partner is pregnant, learn with her about the advantages of breastfeeding for your baby, for your partner, and for your family. Discuss any concerns you have with your prenatal educator or public health nurse. Share with each other your feelings about breastfeeding before your baby is born.

### **Here are some suggested ways that partners can help with breastfeeding.**

- Support the new mother and baby as they learn to breastfeed. Remember, it's a partnership. It takes a while for them to adjust to each other and to breastfeeding.
- Encourage the new mother with words and actions. Help her to get into a comfortable position for feeding. Bring her a snack or drink during the feeding. Play her favourite music. You can do your own thing here and be creative.
- Take off a few days from work to help everyone adjust to the new baby. You and your partner will need one another's help and support as you get to know your baby and share the chores.
- Encourage the mother with breastfeeding techniques you've both learned.



- Help with baby care. You can bring and return your baby to her crib before and after a feeding, and burp the baby when needed. Babies love to be held, rocked, and talked to.
- Lie down or sit with the mother while she breastfeeds the baby.
- Comfort your baby during fussy or hard-to-please times. One way is to lay her, skin-to-skin, over your chest with her ear over your heartbeat. The rise and fall of your chest usually lulls the baby to sleep. You have unique ways to comfort your baby, just as the baby's mother does. Remember, both baby and mother will benefit from your comforting efforts.

Also think about and explore how partners can help with breastfeeding. That way you'll both be ready before your baby comes or at least as ready as you can be!

### **Nursing bras**

Nursing bras are designed for support and comfort in breastfeeding as well as convenience. You can wear regular bras as long as they have no underwires that may cause clogged or plugged milk ducts. Some mothers with heavy breasts may find a regular bra more supportive, especially one with a front closure. Some mothers are comfortable wearing no bra.

During pregnancy, your breasts increase in size, and if you have to buy new bras, consider buying nursing ones. You can wear them while you are pregnant and then later for breastfeeding. You will need 2 or 3 bras and can buy them at department or maternity stores. Have them ready to put into the suitcase you're taking to the hospital.

### **What should I look for in a nursing bra?**

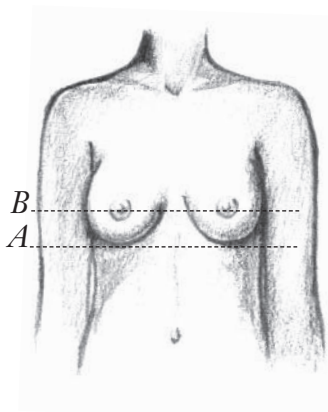
The bra should fit well, be adjustable, and not be tight. It should have seamless cups (without plastic liners) and large flaps that pull down for easy feeding and allow most of the breast to be uncovered. The bra should give firm support and have wide non-stretch straps. It should be made of cotton or cotton-polyester so it is washable. Try bras on before buying and be sure you can unhook and rehook the flap with one hand.

## *Buying Nursing Bras and Nightwear*

### What size do I buy?

Two measurements, band size and cup size, are needed to determine your correct nursing bra size.

First, for the band size—A, measure around your rib cage just below the bustline. The following chart gives the bra band size:



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#### Rib cage measure

27 in (69 cm)	29 in (74 cm)	31 in (79 cm)	33 in (84 cm)	35 in (89 cm)	37 in (94 cm)	39 in (99 cm)
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#### Band size

32 in (80 cm)	34 in (85 cm)	36 in (90 cm)	38 in (95 cm)	40 in (100 cm)	42 in (105 cm)	44 in (110 cm)
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Second, for the cup size—B, measure around your chest over the fullest part of your breasts. Allow for the use of nursing pads when taking this measurement. The difference between the breast measure and the band size indicates the cup size. The following chart gives the bra cup size:

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<b>Difference</b>	1 in (2.5 cm)	2 in (5.0 cm)	3 in (7.5 cm)	4 in (10.0 cm)	5 in (12.5 cm)
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<b>Cup size</b>	A	B	C	D	DD
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Example—If the band size is 34 in (85 cm) and the breast measurement is 37 in (94 cm), the difference of 3 in (7.5 cm) = C cup.

### Why use nursing pads?

Some mothers wear nursing pads in their bra to protect their clothing from leaking milk. You have three choices: buy washable, reusable nursing pads, make your own, or buy disposable nursing pads. Be sure the pads do not have a seam across the nipple because this can cause nipple soreness.

To make your own nursing pads, use small squares of white flannelette or diaper flannel, old cloth diapers, soft face cloths, unscented sanitary napkins, or disposable diapers with the plastic lining removed. Another choice is quilted makeup removal pads, which are inexpensive.

### Nursing nightwear

There's no need to buy special nightwear as long as you can comfortably put the baby to your breast. You will need 2 or 3 nightgowns or pyjamas with front openings for ease in breastfeeding. T-shirts also work well because they can be lifted up easily. There are specially designed nightgowns with slits hidden within folds to make breastfeeding convenient.

Your night clothes should be washable. Be sure to pack them with the things you are taking to the hospital.

# *Breastfeeding in the Hospital* *—Plan Ahead*

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All hospitals in Nova Scotia promote, protect and support breastfeeding as the normal, safe and healthy way to feed healthy, full-term babies. Since all hospitals are not the same, support for breastfeeding may vary.

## **When will my baby be put to my breast?**

If possible, your baby should be put to your breast within 1 hour of birth. Most babies have a quiet, alert period after delivery that lasts up to 3 hours. During this time, your baby may be especially ready to start suckling at your breast. Not all babies will feed, but you can still enjoy this first quiet time together. Then the special relationship between you and your baby begins.

## **Will someone help me the first time I put my baby to my breast?**

Ask if someone with breastfeeding experience will be there to help you get started.

## **Does the hospital encourage rooming-in?**

Baby and mother rooming together 24 hours a day helps to create the breastfeeding partnership. Does your hospital make this possible?

## **Are breastfeeding classes available?**

While you are in hospital, the nurses are there to answer your questions and help you with breastfeeding. Ask for as much help and information as you need. In addition, breastfeeding classes may be available and can be helpful. You can also discuss breastfeeding with other mothers.

## **Do the hospital staff give breastfed babies water or pacifiers?**

Breastfed babies should not be given artificial nipples. Sucking a bottle nipple or pacifier and suckling at the breast are completely different. If babies get a bottle or pacifier, they may have a preference to suck that and not suckle at the breast. This can cause babies to refuse to take the breast at all.

Giving water, sugar and water, or baby formula to healthy babies is rarely required. If medically necessary, liquid can be given by a cup or syringe.

## *Questions to Ask before Labour*



## Does the hospital have a support group or 24-hour breastfeeding telephone hot line?

Either of these resources will give you someone to call as soon as you have questions or concerns about breastfeeding your baby. Keep the telephone number handy. Many problems seem to come up in the middle of the night, so don't hesitate to call.

## Goals for Breastfeeding in the Hospital



**I**t's important that you and your baby get off to the best possible start. You are encouraged to make some breastfeeding goals for your time in the hospital. Some recommended goals are listed.

### **My baby and I will get acquainted as soon as possible**

Your baby should be put to your breast within 1 hour of birth if possible. This is important for the skin-to-skin contact that begins bonding your special relationship. Your baby may not feed at this time, but enjoy the time together.

### **My baby and I will learn correct positioning for breastfeeding**

Correct positioning is important for breastfeeding. Incorrect positioning of your baby at the breast is the biggest cause of nipple soreness. Lots of practice positioning will help you and your baby get it right. Be sure to ask your hospital nurses to check your breastfeeding positioning.



### **My baby and I will develop good latch-on skills**

It's important for your baby to latch onto the breast correctly. Your baby gets milk by pressing on the areola, not by suckling on the nipple. Your nurses will help you and your baby learn correct latch-on skills.



### **My baby and I will try a number of positions for breastfeeding**

Variety is the spice of life with breastfeeding. For example, lying down is a very good way to feed the baby at night because it's restful. It's also a good way for you to rest during a daytime feeding. Ask your nurses for help to try different positions. There's more information about breastfeeding positions in **Breastfeeding Basics**.



### **My baby and I will go to breastfeeding classes in hospital**

If available, breastfeeding classes at the hospital can be helpful. This is a chance to have your concerns and questions answered. You can also chat with other new mothers about their breastfeeding experiences.

You are also encouraged to go to postpartum classes about feeding babies when you get home from the hospital if they are available. Find out the times at your Public Health Services office.

### **I will learn about hand expression of breast milk while in hospital**

Hand expressing of breast milk is a skill you should learn. This skill may be needed during the first week at home to soften the areola of a full breast to enable the baby to latch more easily. There's more information about hand expressing or pumping breast milk in **Breastfeeding Basics**.

## *Sample Baby-feeding Plan*

I have decided to breastfeed my baby and would like my nurse's help with the following:

- My baby will not be given a bottle.
- My baby will not be fed any fluids or supplemental feeds without my signed consent.
- My baby will not be given an artificial nipple or soother.
- My baby will be allowed to room with me for as long as possible each day.
- My baby will be brought to me during the night for feeding.
- I understand that should there be a time when my baby is unable to breastfeed, my nurse will fully explain to me all other options, such as cup feeding, finger feeding, and lactation/nursing aids.

I have considered what my request means for myself, my baby, and my nurse and am fully committed to this.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Mother's signature*

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*Nurse's signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

# *Your Decision to Breastfeed Your Baby*

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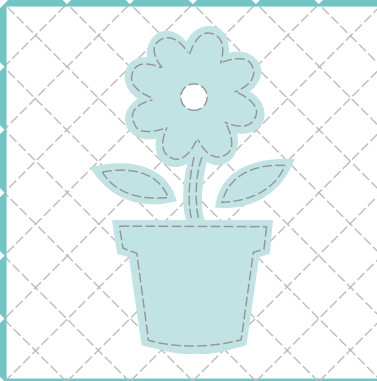
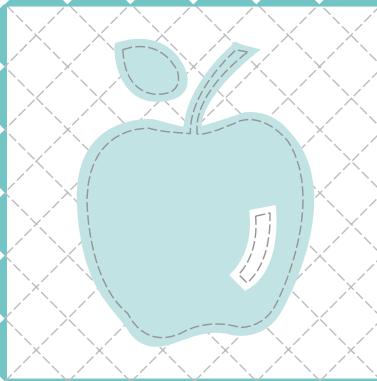
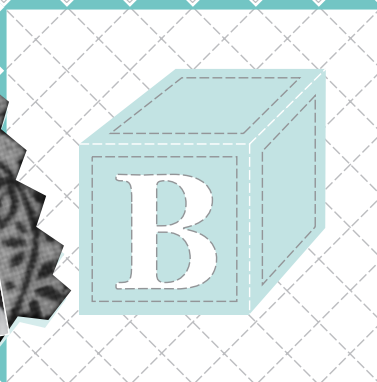
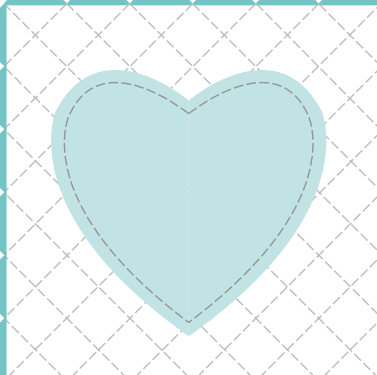
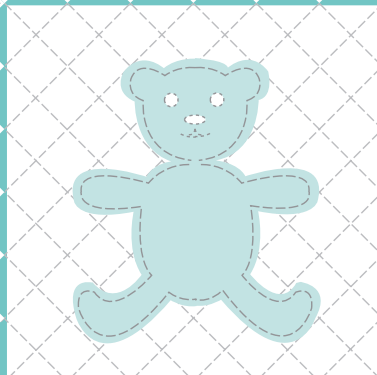
The decision to breastfeed your baby is the first important step towards life long healthy eating for your baby. Breastfeeding is the best choice because breast milk is made for human babies.

The special feeding relationship that you and your baby develop will grow every day. As you both learn the ins and outs of breastfeeding, you will discover many more joys.

Once you have made your firm decision to breastfeed, be sure to get a copy of **Breastfeeding Basics** and **Loving Care: Birth to 6 Months** from your local Public Health Services office.



*Healthy Eating*



A NEW LIFE



# Healthy Eating

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What have you fed your baby today?

While you're pregnant, you are your baby's world. When you eat, you are feeding your baby, too. What you eat during your pregnancy can make a real difference to your baby's growth and development. Eating healthy food is even more important now that you are pregnant.

Healthy eating can also make a difference to your own health during pregnancy and for life. It can help you to prevent or control some of the discomforts of pregnancy, like nausea, constipation and heartburn.

It's important to look at your eating habits while you're pregnant. Your eating habits have a great influence on your family's eating habits. Developing healthy eating habits now will help you, your baby, and your family stay healthy for life.

Healthy eating is good for you, good for your baby, and delicious, too! *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* (see page 87) will help you plan meals and snacks high in the nutrients you need for a healthy pregnancy and healthy baby.



**I**t's natural, normal and healthy to gain weight during your pregnancy. The weight you gain is building a healthy baby, keeping you well, and getting your body ready for breastfeeding. This is not a time to lose weight.

The amount of weight you should gain during pregnancy will depend on how much you weighed **before** you got pregnant.

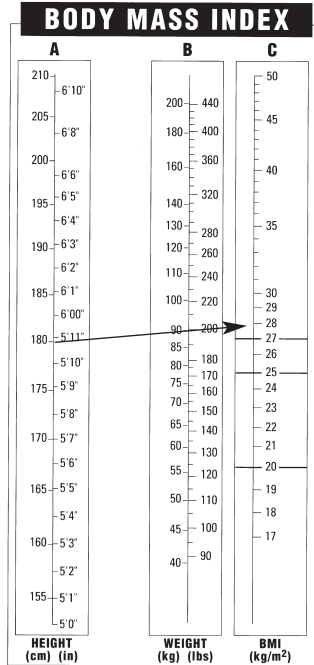
## *Weight Gain*

# Body Mass Index

Use this table to find your pre-pregnancy BMI.

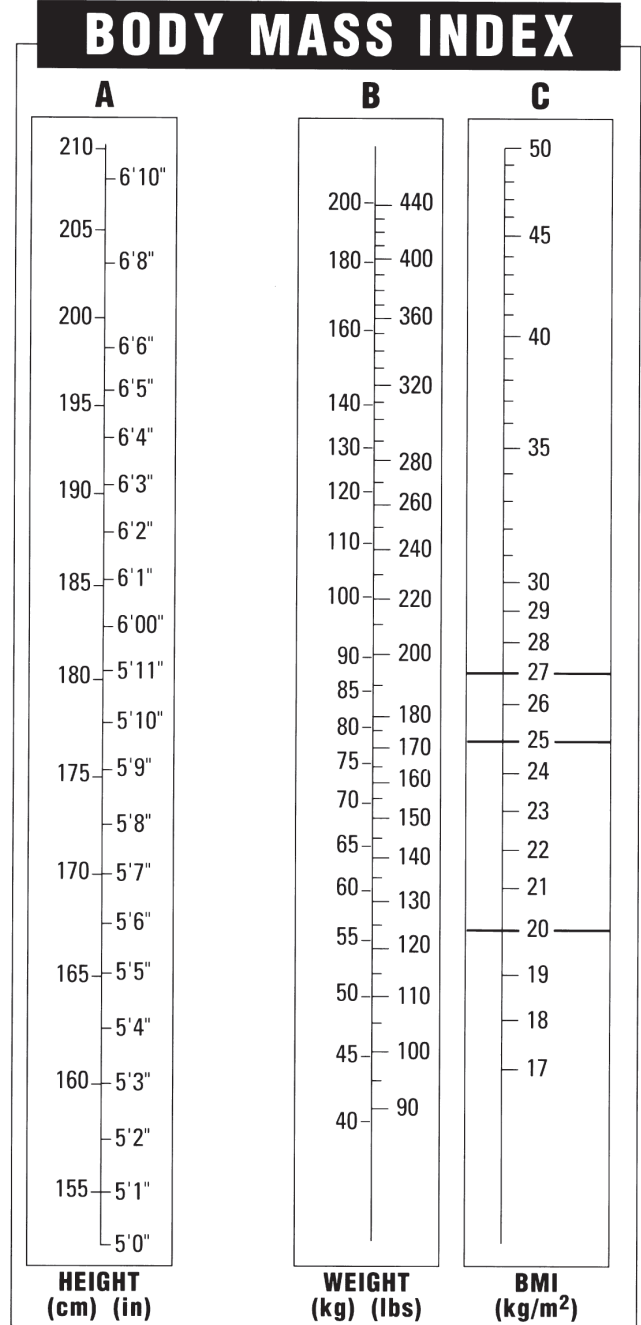
## How to Find Your Body Mass Index (BMI)

1. Mark an X at your height on the line in box A.
2. Mark an X at your weight in box B.
3. Draw a straight line from the X in box A through the X in box B and across to the line in box C.
4. Your Body Mass Index (BMI) is the number where your line crosses the line in box C.



Example:  
 This person is  
 5 ft.11 in. tall, and  
 weighs 200 lbs.  
 His BMI is 28.

My BMI is \_\_\_\_\_ .



Source: Expert Group on Weight Standards, Health and Welfare Canada

Once you know your Body Mass Index (BMI) before you became pregnant, you can use this table to see how much weight you need to gain during pregnancy.

Pre-pregnancy BMI category	Mean rate of weight gain in the 2nd and 3rd trimester		Recommended* range of total weight gain	
	kg/week	lb/week	kg	lbs
BMI < 18.5 Underweight	0.5	1.0	12.5 - 18	28 - 40
BMI 18.5 - 24.9 Normal weight	0.4	1.0	11.5 - 16	25 - 35
BMI 25.0 - 29.9 Overweight	0.3	0.6	7 - 11.5	15 - 25
BMI ≥ 30 <sup>3</sup> Obese	0.2	0.5	5 - 9	11 - 20

\* Calculations assume a total of 0.5 - 2 kg (1 - 5 lbs) weight gain in the first trimester.

If you are pregnant with more than one baby (twins, triplets) you will need to gain more weight. Your health care provider will advise you.

**W**hen you gain weight during pregnancy is just as important as how much weight you gain.

Most women don't gain much weight during the first three months of pregnancy. About 0.5 to 2 kg (1 to 5 pounds) is normal. Although still very small, your baby is developing very quickly. Healthy eating is very important early in your pregnancy.

For the rest of your pregnancy, the baby continues to develop and to grow bigger and stronger. If you are in the normal weight range, you should expect to gain about 0.5 kg (1 pound) a week.

This steady, gradual weight gain is a sign of a normal, healthy pregnancy. If you find you are gaining much more, or much less, than 0.5 kg (1 pound) a week, talk it over with your doctor.

## *Gaining Weight Gradually*

## Gain a healthy amount of weight

Gaining a healthy amount of weight gives you the best chance of having a healthy baby.

A healthy weight gain for most mothers is 25 to 35 pounds. Your health care provider may recommend a different weight gain if you

- were overweight or underweight before you became pregnant
- are 19 or younger
- are having twins or triplets

When you gain a healthy amount of weight, only 5 to 8 pounds of this weight gain is fat. Your body stores this fat to give you the extra energy you will need while pregnant and breastfeeding. Breastfeeding can help you to lose this extra weight.

Breasts — 2 to 3 pounds

Blood — 4 pounds

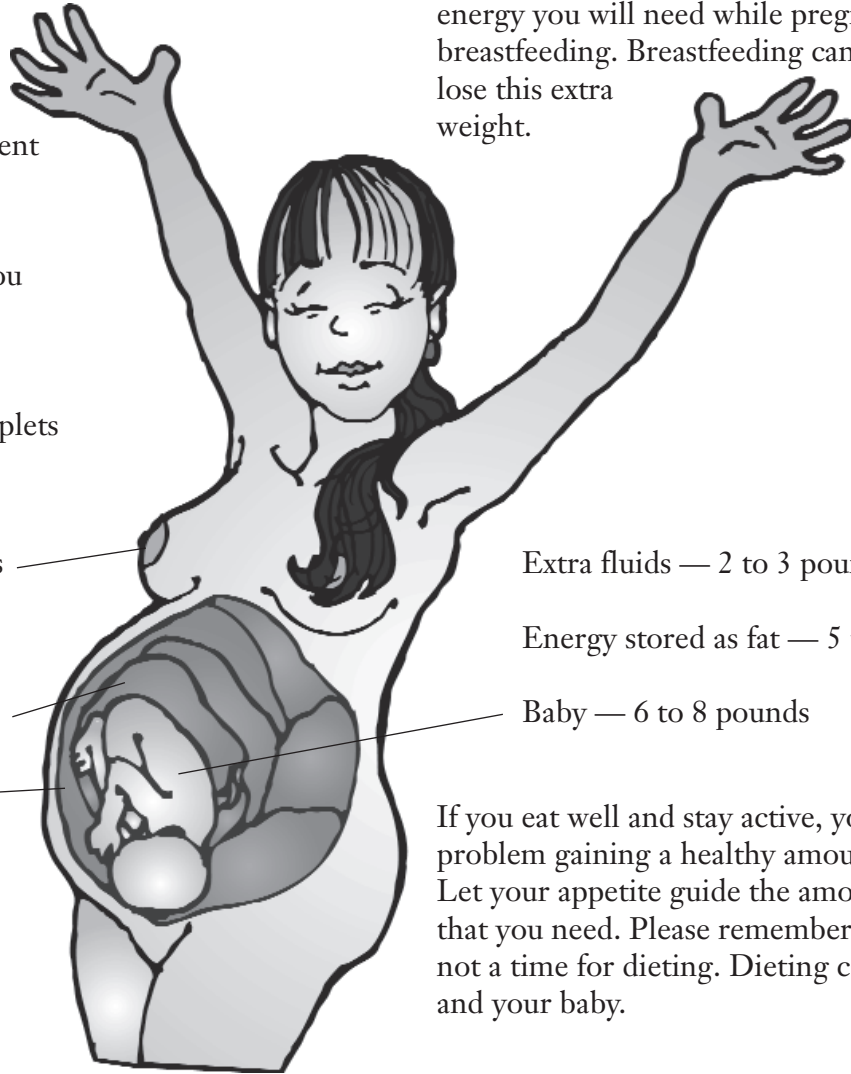
Uterus — 2 to 3 pounds

Placenta and amniotic fluid — 4 to 6 pounds

Extra fluids — 2 to 3 pounds

Energy stored as fat — 5 to 8 pounds

Baby — 6 to 8 pounds



If you eat well and stay active, you will have no problem gaining a healthy amount of weight. Let your appetite guide the amount of food that you need. Please remember, pregnancy is not a time for dieting. Dieting can harm you and your baby.

# What You Need

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While you're pregnant, you need to eat healthy foods because you are making food and nutrient choices for yourself **and** your growing baby.

This means that **every day** you should have

- regular meals and snacks
- food from each of the 4 food groups
- plenty of water
- a small amount (30 to 45 mL) of unsaturated fat
- a multivitamin supplement containing folic acid and iron

It means that you may have to limit or avoid

- alcohol (avoid)
- caffeine
- artificial sweeteners
- less nutritious foods

No one food is perfect. You need a variety of healthy foods to be healthy and to build a healthy baby.



## *Regular Meals*

**E**ating regular meals and snacks is an important part of healthy eating. You and your baby both need a steady supply of food to stay well. It's very difficult to get this if you skip meals.

It's a good idea to make a habit of eating regularly. If you find that eating three meals a day is difficult, you can try having smaller meals and snacks more often. The important thing is to stick to an eating pattern that is comfortable for you and gives you and your baby the food you need.

It's especially important that you eat when you first get up in the morning. From bed time to waking up is a long time to go without food. Your body slows down while you're asleep, and you need healthy food to help it get going again.



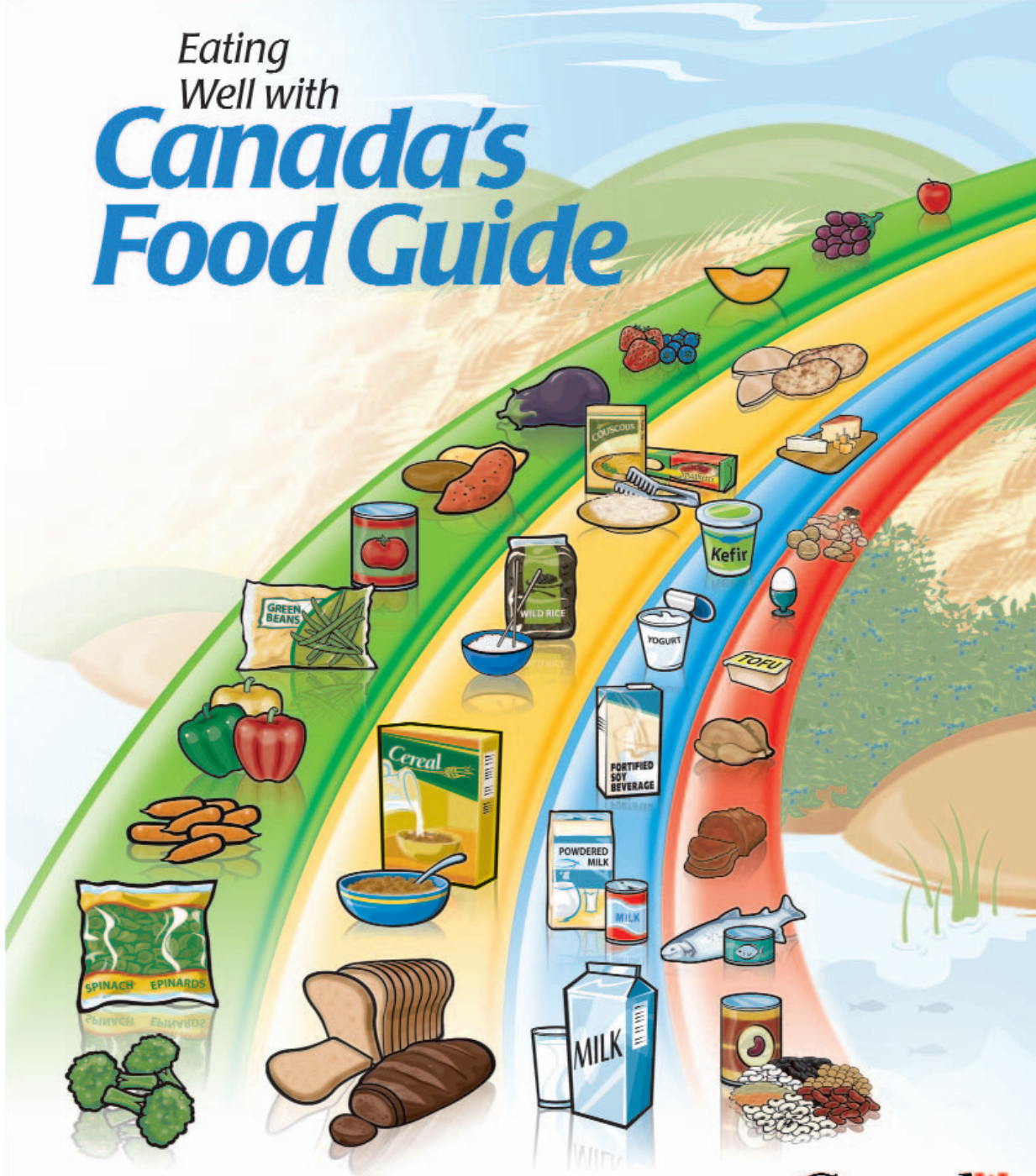
Health  
Canada

Santé  
Canada

Your health and  
safety... our priority.

Votre santé et votre  
sécurité... notre priorité.

# Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide



Canada

Public Health Services

[www.gov.ns.ca/hpp](http://www.gov.ns.ca/hpp)

