



# STAY HEALTHY

Keep in mind the importance of a well-balanced diet, the need for folic acid intake, continued nursing, your family's immunizations, and the health risks of harmful substances.

Here are some tips and ideas to keep you healthy and active!

## Eat Well

Eating well is about making food choices for a healthy lifestyle!

- Eat a variety of food, including fruits and vegetables, to give you the nutrients you need to stay healthy.
- Choose whole grains such as oatmeal, brown rice, whole wheat bread, and pasta.
- Select leaner choices of meat and poultry. Eat other sources of protein such as seafood, nuts and seeds, lentils, dried beans and peas, and soy products.
- For more healthy eating tips, go to [choosemyplate.gov](http://choosemyplate.gov).



## Folic Acid

All people who can become pregnant should take a multivitamin with 400 micrograms of folic acid every day. Folic acid can help prevent birth defects of your baby's brain and spine. However, the protection needs to begin before becoming pregnant. Along with a multivitamin, choose foods high in folic acid:

- Enriched bread, cereal, and pasta
- Oranges and orange juice
- Beans, peas, and lentils
- Dark green leafy vegetables



## Be Wise – Immunize!

Ask your health care provider for a schedule of necessary immunizations.

## Physical Activity

Did you know that physical activity gives you more energy? It also lifts your mood, helps you feel more relaxed, and helps you sleep better! Slowly build up to 30 minutes or more of moderate-intensity activities each day. Some ideas of moderate-intensity activities:

- Walk fast or go hiking
- Swim or water aerobics
- Ride a bike
- Dance
- Walk in place while on the phone
- Work in a garden

Talk with your health care provider about the best physical activities for you.





## Emotional Health

It is common to feel a mix of emotions after having a baby. You may have trouble eating or sleeping and feel overwhelmed caring for your baby. To help with these feelings, eat well, rest often, and ask your family and friends for support during this time.

If you feel sad, anxious, or like you can't handle things, you may have postpartum depression (PPD). PPD is very common and does not mean you are not a good caregiver.

If you feel sad or upset for more than two weeks or are afraid you may hurt yourself or your baby, talk about your feelings with your health care provider, WIC staff, or people you trust. It is vital to get help. Healthy feelings between you and your baby are important for your baby's development.

You can also call Perinatal Support Washington at 1-888-404-7763 or visit [perinatalsupport.org](http://perinatalsupport.org).

## Plan Your Family

If you plan to have more children, consider waiting at least 18 months between pregnancies. Your body needs time to recover and get to a healthy weight.

Talk to your health care provider or nurse about a birth control method that will work well for you.

## Protect Yourself and Your Family from Harmful Substances

Tobacco, alcohol, and illegal drugs are harmful to the health of your family. Set a good example for your children by not using them. Use medications as directed. The choices you make today can affect your family's health now and in the future.

If someone in the home smokes, breathing secondhand smoke or e-cigarette aerosol is very harmful to babies and children. Being around tobacco smoke increases the chance of SIDS and developing asthma, bronchitis, ear infections, and cancer.

Stay away from all smoke. There's no safe level of exposure for your baby. All forms of smoke, including vaping, are harmful. For a healthier baby and a healthier you, choose to be free from tobacco, e-cigarettes, marijuana, and smoke. Set a "NO SMOKING" rule for your home. Don't let people smoke around your baby. For help quitting, call 1-800-QUITNOW or visit [quitline.com](http://quitline.com).

## Think About Nursing

Health care providers recommend nursing for at least one year, and longer if you or your baby desire. Providing your milk to your baby increases health benefits.

- Your milk has just the right nutrients for growth and development.
- Your milk supports your growing baby.
- Your milk helps your baby fight infection and be sick less often. Providing your milk helps protect your health too!
- Giving your baby your milk promotes bonding.

