



A postpartum guide to

# Being healthy for you and your baby



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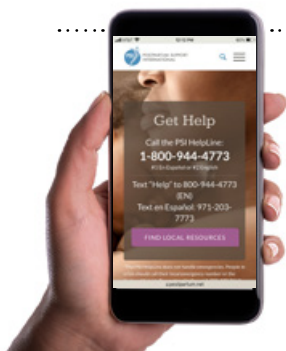
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# Congratulations! Your Baby is Born

Having a baby can be one of the most joyful times of your life. There may also be times when you feel overwhelmed, emotional and sleep deprived.

To have enough energy to care for your family, you also need to take care of yourself. Throughout this handout, we will share tips and advice from other parents to help you thrive.

If you are struggling, reach out to WIC or your health care provider right away. There are resources that can help. Caring for a baby takes the support of a team. WIC is here to help!





# Getting Enough Sleep

[Newborns sleep](#) a lot, but they do not sleep like adults. Most newborns take many short naps during the day and night instead of sleeping long periods at a time. This can make it hard for parents to get enough sleep. Below are some things you can try to help you get enough rest:

- **Share your room with your baby.** Put your baby to sleep on their back in a crib or bassinet close to your bed. Having your baby close lets you calm them quickly and get back to sleep.
- **If you can, sleep when your baby sleeps.** Play soft music or a quiet fan and dim the lights to help you and your baby sleep. Your baby will wake up less as they get older.



- **Keep the lights low.** Keeping the lights low while you feed and change your baby's diaper during the night will help you get back to sleep more quickly.
- **Ask friends and family to help.** They can care for your baby so you can rest, especially in the first few weeks while you are healing.
- **Make a list of chores that need to be done.** When someone offers to help, let them pick from the list so you can focus on taking care of you and your baby.
- **Limit coffee and energy drinks.** [Caffeine](#) can pass into breastmilk and disrupt sleep for you and your baby.





# Your Mental Health

It is normal to feel a mix of emotions after having your baby. Changes to your body, less sleep, and worries about caring for your newborn can make you feel unlike yourself. This feeling is sometimes called “baby blues.” Some signs include:

- Crying easily for no reason
- Trouble eating and sleeping
- Being very worried about caring for your baby
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Having a short temper

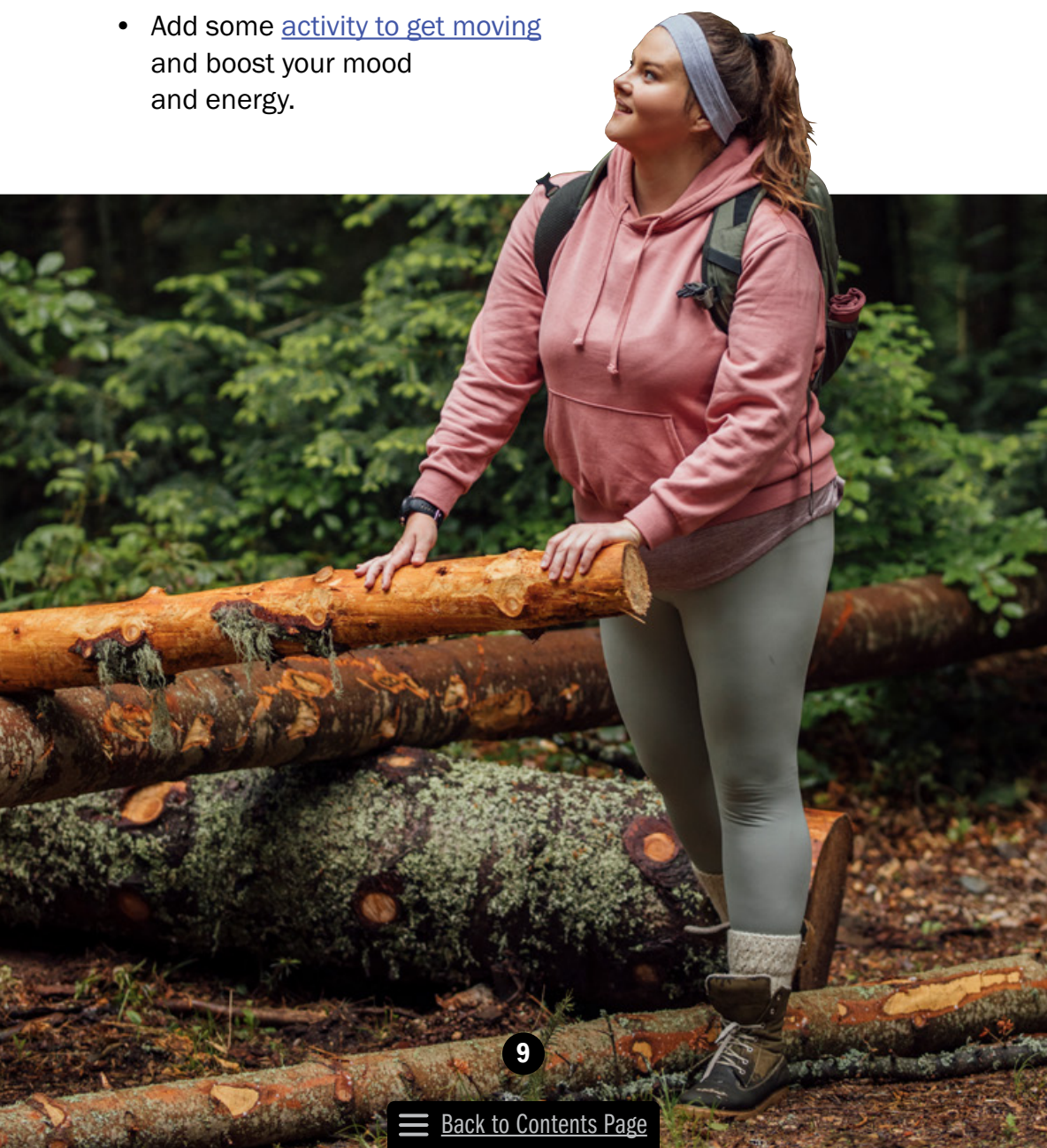
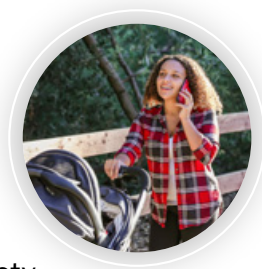
## Many parents have the baby blues. What can you do?

- Connect with family and friends.
- Rest for about 30 minutes. Turn off all screens and close your eyes.
- [Eat healthy](#) foods every few hours, like fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.





- Go outside and enjoy some sunlight, if possible. Even 20 minutes can refresh you.
- Keep your schedule light. If you accomplish one thing a day, this is a great success.
- [Breastfeed](#). It can help with depression and anxiety.
- If you feel sad, irritable or anxious for **more than 2 weeks**, talk to your doctor. You may have what is called postpartum depression or anxiety.
- Add some [activity to get moving](#) and boost your mood and energy.



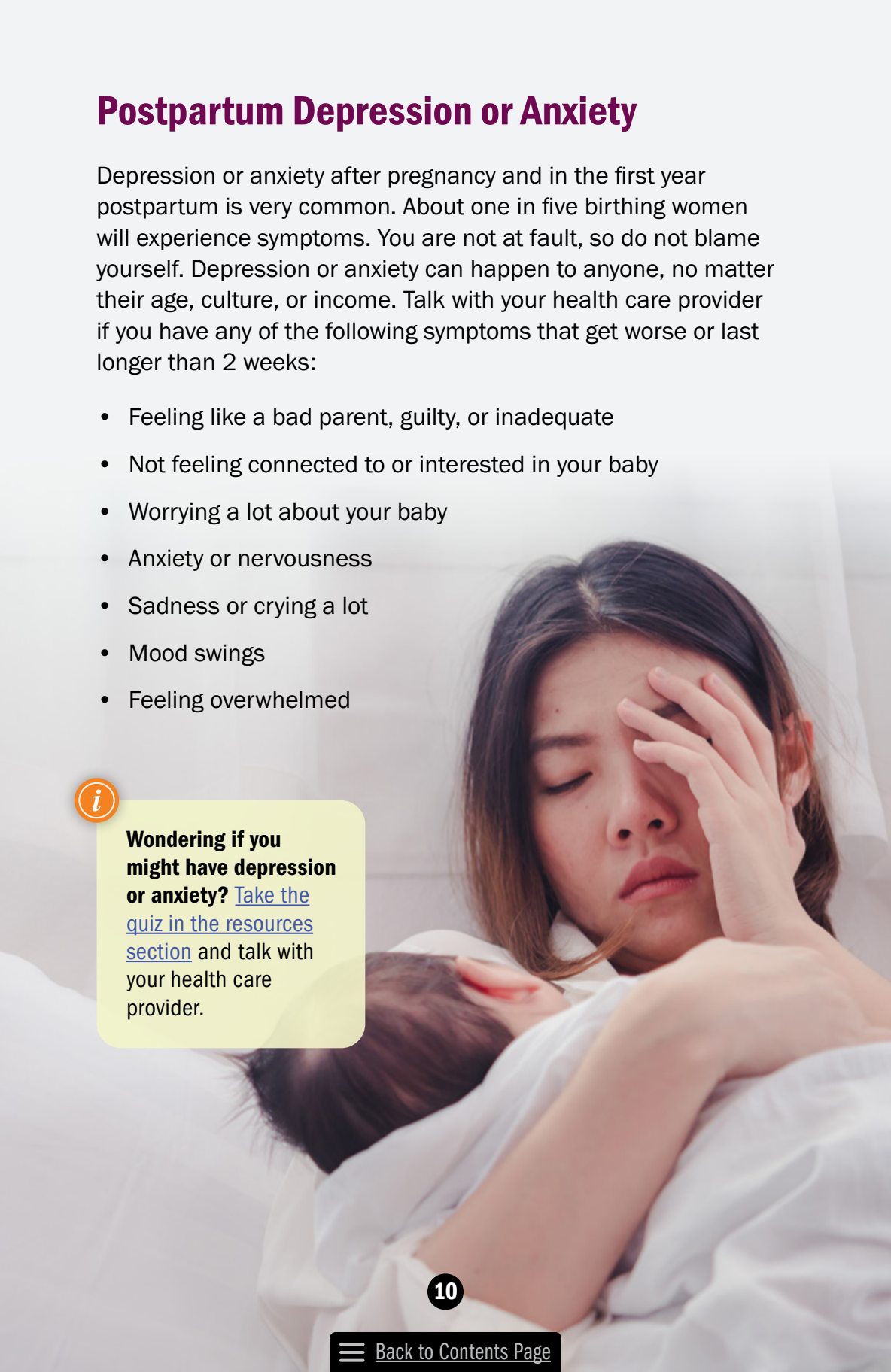
# Postpartum Depression or Anxiety

Depression or anxiety after pregnancy and in the first year postpartum is very common. About one in five birthing women will experience symptoms. You are not at fault, so do not blame yourself. Depression or anxiety can happen to anyone, no matter their age, culture, or income. Talk with your health care provider if you have any of the following symptoms that get worse or last longer than 2 weeks:

- Feeling like a bad parent, guilty, or inadequate
- Not feeling connected to or interested in your baby
- Worrying a lot about your baby
- Anxiety or nervousness
- Sadness or crying a lot
- Mood swings
- Feeling overwhelmed



**Wondering if you might have depression or anxiety? [Take the quiz in the resources section](#) and talk with your health care provider.**





## **Call your health care provider right away or 911, if you have:**

- Thoughts of harming yourself or your baby
- Panic attacks which could include rapid heart rate, trembling, shortness of breath
- Fear that you cannot take care of your baby
- Unusual thinking, such as seeing or hearing things that are not there

## **Asking for help is good for you, your baby, and your whole family.**

- Do not wait for someone to ask if you are very sad, depressed, or anxious.
- Speak up and ask for support. Asking for help is being strong.





## How to seek treatment:

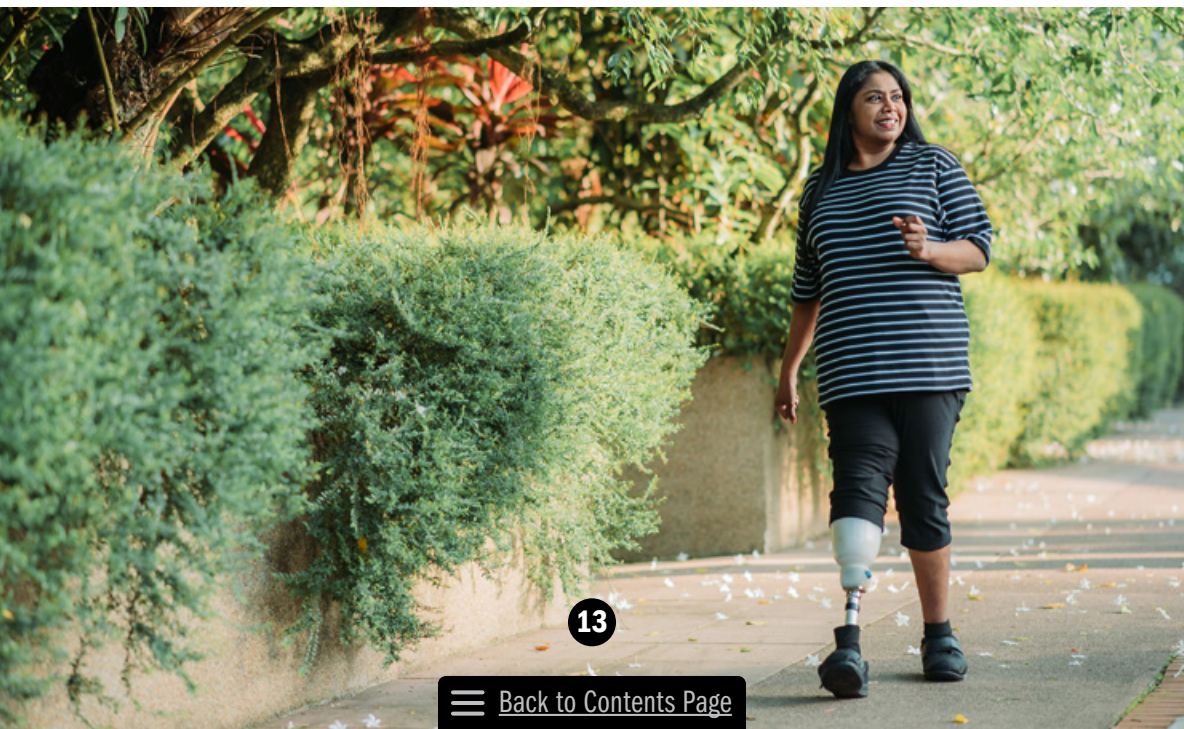
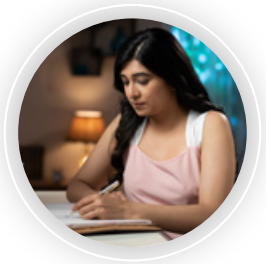
- Talk to your health care provider. They can help you find treatments (such as counseling or medication) that could work for you.
- Ask your health care provider about Medi-Cal and insurance coverage for mental health services. Low or no cost help is available through your health plan, including Medi-Cal, and may be available through your county behavioral health department.
- Call the 24-hour advice line number on the back of your health plan card when a health care provider is not available. You do not need a referral to get mental health services.
- Find someone to talk to about your feelings: a doctor, nurse practitioner, nurse midwife, another parent, or WIC staff. Know that your feelings are real, important, and common.
- Ask WIC staff for mental health resources in your local area and use the resources offered in this booklet.
- [Take the quiz in our resource section.](#)





# What can you do now about anxiety or depression?

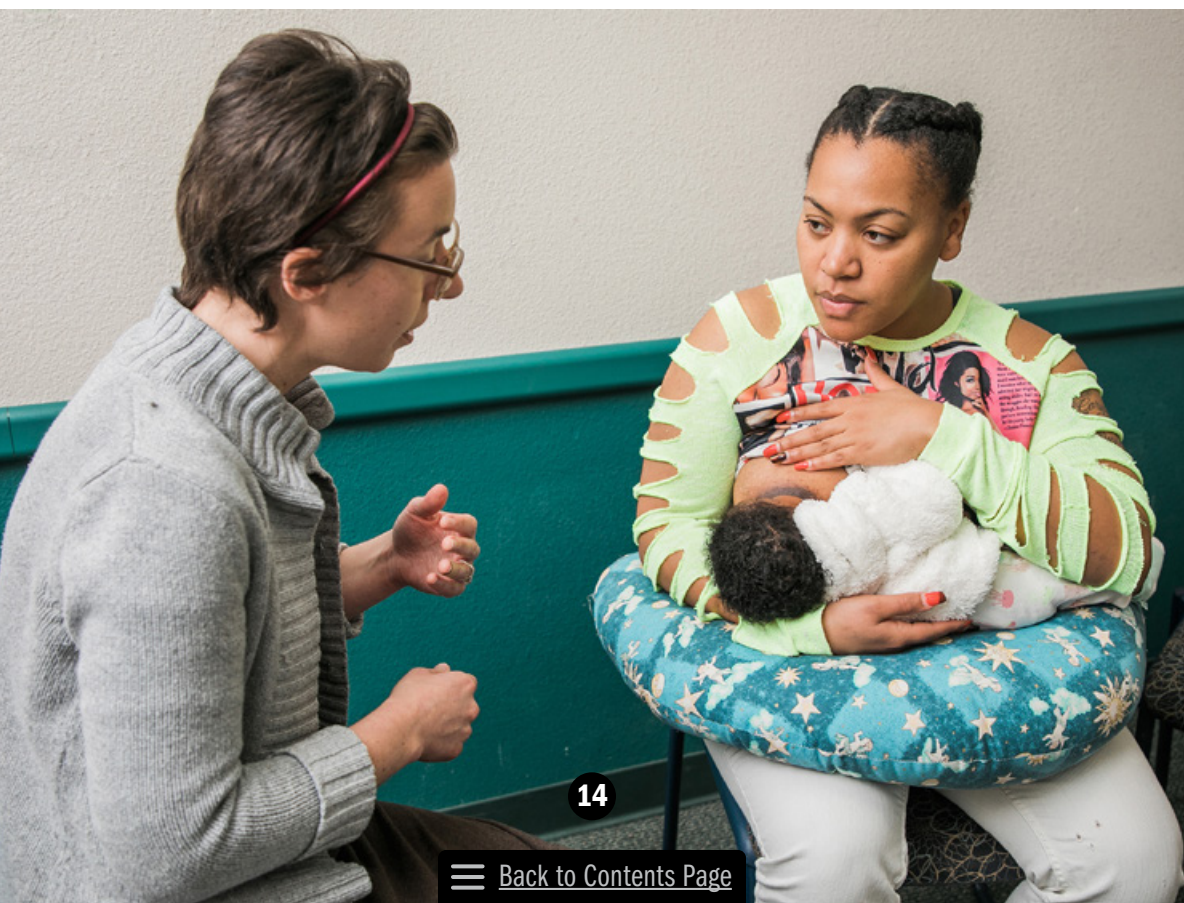
- Find 15 minutes each day for time for yourself. Try some physical activity you like, take a bath, or do something else you enjoy.
- Do not worry about being the perfect parent. You are still healing and parenting is a lot of work!
- Avoid being alone.
- Keep a diary and write down your emotions. You may see that you are feeling better and healthier as time goes on.
- Eat small frequent meals.
- Get outside if possible. Fresh air and a new environment can help clear your mind.
- There is a connection between what you may have experienced in childhood, and the physical and mental health issues you face now. Taking care of yourself in new ways can help you on a positive path. [Learn about Adverse Childhood Experiences.](#)



## Feeding Your Baby

Having a baby can be both exciting and overwhelming. New parents can face many unexpected challenges in the beginning. It is important to remember that caring for yourself is as important as caring for your baby. If you feel overwhelmed and it seems like feeding and caring for your baby is difficult, talk to your WIC counselor for help.

The decision to breastfeed is a very personal choice. **Breastfeeding** can help new parents feel connected to their babies and manage their stress levels. If you feel like your breastfeeding challenges are adding to your anxiety or mood disorder, talk to your WIC counselor. WIC supports all infant feeding choices.





# Taking Care of You!

It is important to remember that caring for yourself is as important as caring for your baby. When you are healthier, your whole family is healthier.







# I Feel Great. Do I Really Need to See My Doctor?

It is important to visit your health care provider 4 to 6 weeks after giving birth. Also, see your health care provider each year to get a regular physical exam. Both of these yearly visits can give you an update on your overall wellness and give you a chance to ask questions.



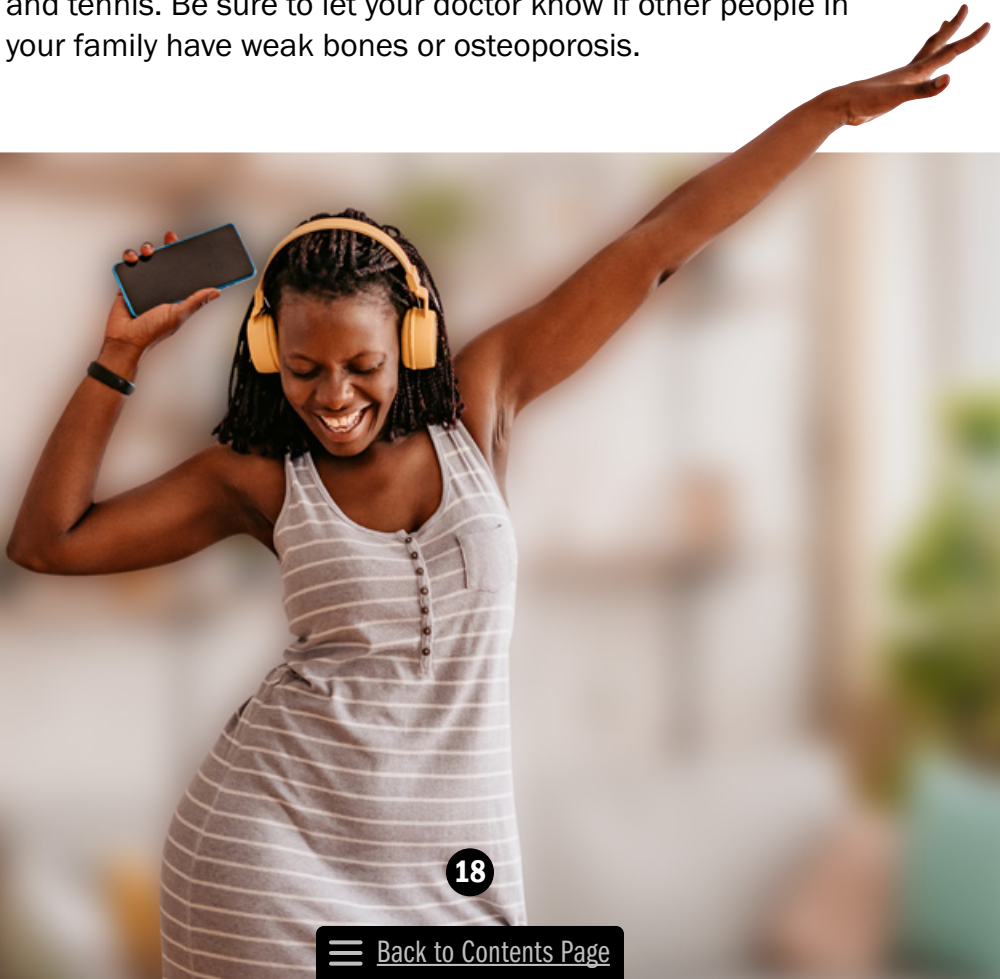
# What Can I Do to Strengthen My Bones?

Great question! Keeping your bones strong and healthy now will help prevent them from becoming weak later in life.

[Calcium](#) plays an important role in keeping your bones strong.



There are many foods other than milk that have calcium; you can find these foods on [page 37](#). Any physical activity that puts weight on your bones will strengthen them as well. Some examples are walking, climbing stairs, dancing, weight training, hiking, jogging, and tennis. Be sure to let your doctor know if other people in your family have weak bones or osteoporosis.



# What Happens if I Get Busy and Forget to Brush My Teeth?

Did you know that your dental health can affect your whole body? By taking care of your teeth, you are preventing other health issues, while setting a good example for your kids.



**Brush your teeth at least 2 times a day.**



**Floss every day.**



**Eat a healthy diet full of fruits and vegetables.**



**Visit a dentist every 6 months.**



**Get a new toothbrush every 3–4 months.**



# Eating to Feel Good

Feeling a little out of sorts? Give your body time to adjust after having a baby. Eating a nutrient-rich diet over time may help boost your mood and ease stress, anxiety, baby blues, and depression.

Eat with the idea to include more foods like fruits, vegetables, fish, lower fat dairy, whole grains, beans, and nuts. Eat fewer processed foods and foods with added sugars.





# Little Things Can Make a Difference

## Be realistic.

The small changes you make can be easy. Put fruit on your cereal instead of sugar and drink water with a slice of cucumber instead of soda.



## Be inclusive.

Try to include a variety of nutrient-rich fruits and vegetables when you can. Look for dark green, orange, yellow and red produce. Add some fish. Choose low or nonfat dairy foods. Eat whole grains for fiber and vitamins—whole wheat tortillas, oatmeal, brown rice. Beans and nuts are great choices, too.







## Be flexible.

It is all about balance. Eat a lighter lunch if you are going out for a big dinner. Look for easy ways to make healthier choices. Split a large restaurant meal with a friend and order an extra side of veggies or a salad. Eat half of a large meal and save half for lunch the next day.

## Be mindful.

Enjoy all foods, just do not overdo it. Eat slowly, enjoy each bite, and listen to your body. Eat when you are hungry and stop when you feel full. Turn off the TV to focus on food and family time.



## Be energized.

Breakfast is the best way to begin your day. Breakfast gives you energy, brain power, and a healthy start. Choose foods that work for you. Add a healthy food you enjoy to each meal.



## Be drug, alcohol, and tobacco free.

Avoid substances like these which may make it harder for you to make healthy food choices and care for your children. [Check the resources section.](#)



## Be patient.

Start small. Be patient. Small changes will add up to lasting positive effects. If you want to lose weight, the best way is slowly, but do not focus on the scale. Focus on making small changes each week.

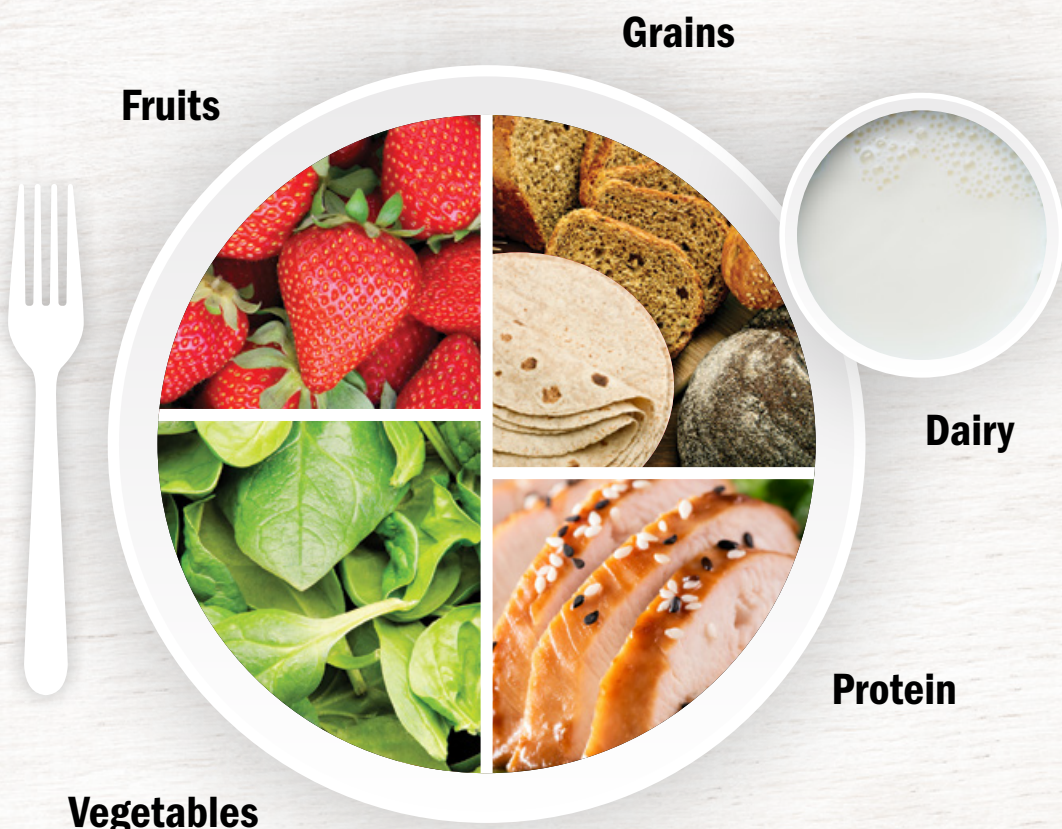
## Be accepting.

Not every meal is going to be perfectly healthy! Accept that it is okay to not be perfect. The idea is to make small changes over time towards a healthier you.



# Feel Energized with a Variety of Foods

Caring for your baby takes a lot of energy. Eat a variety of foods throughout the week to have energy for yourself and your baby. Include foods with different colors and textures. Each day try to fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables. Split the other half of your plate between whole grains and lean protein foods. Try to include dairy foods with your meal, choosing nonfat or low fat options.



Source: [www.myplate.gov](http://www.myplate.gov)



# Eat the following most days of the week:



3

## Vegetables

**3 cups of vegetables a day**

1 cup = 1 cup raw or cooked



2

## Fruits

**2 cups of fruit a day**

1 cup = 1 cup fresh, canned, or frozen



6

## Protein

**6 servings of protein a day**

1 serving = 1 ounce



6

## Grains

**6 servings of grains a day**

1 serving = 1 ounce



3

## Dairy

**3 servings of dairy a day**

1 serving = 1 cup



# Recipes and Cultural Food Beliefs

Many cultures have food-related postpartum customs. These customs may strive to “warm” the birth parent, help with digestion, replenish nutrient stores, or build milk supply. There is no proven science in these customs, but that does not diminish their value. Here are some recipes that give a nod to cultural customs, provide a variety of nutrients, and a healthy dose of caring from your WIC family.





## Golden Milk | (Makes 1 Serving)

**This warm, creamy, and subtly sweet drink can be a great start to a hectic day, or a great way to end one! It offers up some good nutrients, like calcium, potassium, protein, and vitamins D and B12.**



### Ingredients

- 1 cup milk
- 2 teaspoons honey
- 1 ½ teaspoons almond butter (optional)
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon (ground, plus additional for serving)
- ¼ teaspoon turmeric (ground)
- ⅛ teaspoon ginger (ground)

### Directions

1. Combine the milk, honey, almond butter, vanilla extract, cinnamon, turmeric, ginger, and any optional spices in a small saucepan.
2. Heat over medium until warmed through, whisking briskly so that the almond butter does not stick to the bottom and the spices incorporate. Do not let boil.

### Notes

- **Optional additions:** tiny pinch of ground black pepper, ground cardamom, or ground cloves.
- **To store:** keep leftovers in an airtight container, such as a mason jar or travel mug, for up to 3 days in the refrigerator.
- **To reheat:** warm on the stove, stirring to recombine the spices and almond butter. If reheating in the microwave, stir every 20- to 30-second interval, and keep a close eye on it so it does not bubble over.



# Chinese Rice Soup (Congee)

(Makes 6 Servings)



## Ingredients

- 7 cups water
- 4 cups low sodium chicken stock
- 1 cup white rice
- 1 ½ teaspoons minced fresh ginger
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 6 cups chopped bok choy
- 1 pound fresh or frozen shrimp, shelled and deveined
- ½ teaspoon salt (optional)

## Directions

1. In large pot, over medium-high heat: add water, chicken broth and rice.
2. Bring to a boil, cover, and lower heat.
3. Cook for 1 ½ hours, until rice is broken down and the soup is creamy.
4. Add ginger and sesame oil; continue to cook for 15 minutes.
5. Add bok choy and continue to cook for about 10 minutes or until bok choy is soft.
6. Add shrimp and cook for 5 minutes or until all shrimp is completely pink.
7. Add salt, if desired, and serve.

Source: [www.eatfresh.org](http://www.eatfresh.org)





# Chicken Noodle Soup

(Makes 6 Servings)



## Ingredients

- 3 pounds chicken pieces (skin removed)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 3 carrots (large, scrubbed, coarsely chopped)
- 1 onion (chopped)
- 4 cups noodles, dry
- 1 cup celery (washed and coarsely chopped)
- thyme or sage (optional)

## Directions

1. Place chicken pieces in large kettle. Cover completely with water. Cover, bring to boil, reduce heat, and simmer 2–3 hours.
2. Remove cooked chicken pieces from broth with tongs or slotted spoon. Cool 10–15 minutes before separating bones from meat. Break meat into bite-size pieces. Remove any bones from broth. Remove fat from broth by skimming with spoon, adding and removing ice cubes, or blotting top of broth with paper towels.
3. Put chicken meat, seasonings and vegetables into stock. Bring broth to a boil, cover, reduce heat and cook about 15–20 minutes on medium heat until carrots are crisp-tender.
4. Add noodles and boil uncovered for about 6–7 minutes, stirring occasionally to break up any noodles that might stick together. (One cup of dry noodles (1.5 ounce) makes one cup of cooked noodles). Ladle into soup bowls.
5. Refrigerate or freeze leftovers within 2 hours of cooking. If refrigerated, use within 2 days. When reheating, bring to a boil.

Source: [www.myplate.gov](http://www.myplate.gov)





# Brown Rice Porridge | (Makes 6 Servings)

## Ingredients

- 3 cups cooked brown rice
- 1 ½ cups apple juice
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon salt (optional)
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- Peaches fresh, canned, or frozen (thawed), sliced for topping or Pears fresh, canned, or frozen (thawed), sliced for topping or Bananas sliced for topping

## Directions

1. Combine all ingredients, except fruit, in a saucepan or stockpot. Heat over medium heat until simmering. Cover and turn heat to low for 20 minutes.
2. Stir occasionally, until thick and creamy.
3. Divide into bowls and top with fruit, if desired.

Source: [www.eatfresh.org](http://www.eatfresh.org)





# Cocoa Nut Butter Energy Bites | (Makes 5)

## Ingredients

- 1/2 cup peanut butter or almond butter
- 1/4 cup maple syrup or honey or agave syrup
- 1/4 cup chia seeds
- 1 cup rolled oats, plus extra for rolling
- 1/3 cup unsweetened shredded coconut
- 2 tablespoons cocoa powder

## Directions

1. In a large bowl, mix all ingredients together, starting with 1/2 cup nut butter and adding more if the mixture seems too dry. Chill for 10 minutes.
2. Shape into small balls, about 1 inch in diameter. Roll in toasted oats, if desired. Enjoy!

Source: [www.eatfresh.org](http://www.eatfresh.org)





# Important Nutrients and How to Get Them

We need many nutrients, and certain ones are especially important for women's health. Focus on choosing the foods that fit your budget and family lifestyle. Here are some ideas that may help.



# Boost Your Iron, Boost Your Energy

[Iron](#) has many important jobs including making healthy blood, giving you energy, and protecting you from sickness and infections. Low iron levels are common in women, so it is important that you aim to eat plenty of iron-rich foods like:

- Liver and organ meats
- Beef, chicken, and pork
- Beans, tofu, and cereals with iron

## Ways to Increase Your Iron:

- Eat iron-rich foods with vitamin C-rich foods like tomatoes, bell peppers, strawberries, oranges, or broccoli.
- Eat 2 iron-rich foods together like chicken and beans.
- Cook in cast-iron pots or skillets.
- Avoid drinking tea or coffee with iron-rich foods. These drinks make it harder for your body to use iron.





# Calcium—From Milk and More

Women of all ages need [calcium](#) to keep their bones healthy and strong. Most women do not get enough calcium. After having your baby, it is even more important to get enough calcium since pregnancy may have lowered your body's calcium.

**Dairy products like milk, yogurt, cheese, and cottage cheese have the highest amounts of calcium. Other foods can also help women reach their daily needs.**



## Some other examples of foods with calcium:



Black beans, black-eyed peas, and other beans



Firm tofu, tempeh



Fish with edible bones  
(canned sardines and salmon)



Breads and juices with  
added calcium



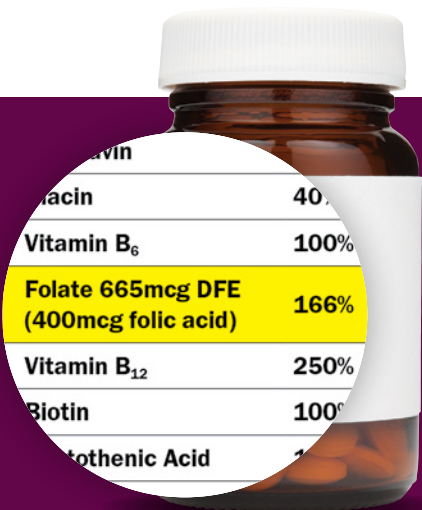
Soy and rice milk, with  
added calcium



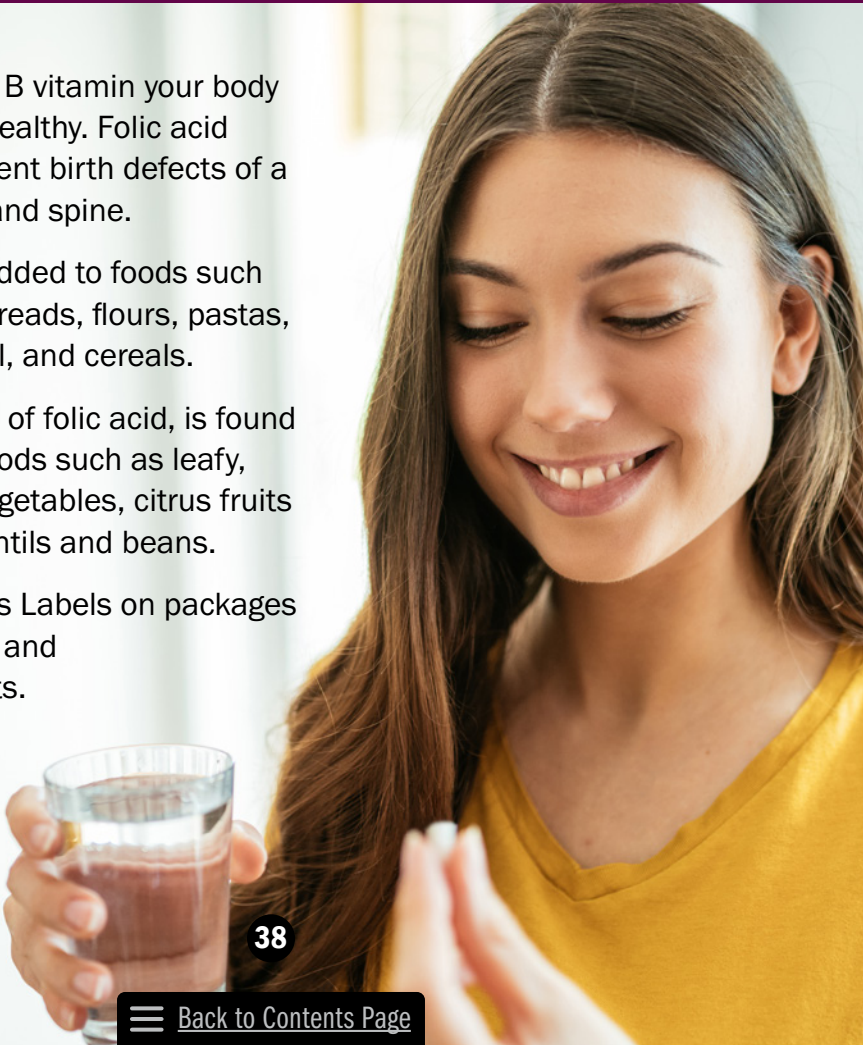
Spinach, kale, turnip, collard  
and mustard greens

# How to Get Enough Folic Acid

To get enough folic acid, you need to take a multivitamin with at least 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid, with food, every day. In addition, eat a varied diet rich in folate.



- Folic acid is a B vitamin your body needs to be healthy. Folic acid can help prevent birth defects of a baby’s brain and spine.
- Folic acid is added to foods such as enriched breads, flours, pastas, rice, cornmeal, and cereals.
- Folate, a form of folic acid, is found naturally in foods such as leafy, dark green vegetables, citrus fruits and juices, lentils and beans.
- Nutrition Facts Labels on packages give folic acid and folate amounts.





# Fiber-Friendly Food Swaps and More



Fiber is in plant foods like fruits, vegetables, and whole-grain breads and cereals. Fiber is not found in meats, dairy, or refined (white) grains.

Fiber is important for a healthy digestive system. Fiber helps prevent constipation and can make you feel full faster. Add fiber to your diet slowly and be sure to drink plenty of water. By making a few small changes to the foods you choose, you can increase your fiber.

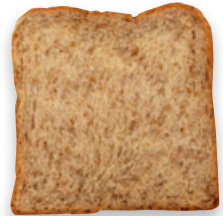
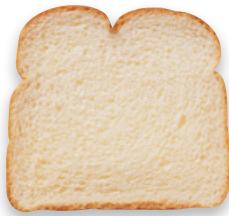


# Fiber-friendly Food Swaps

**Replace**  
white rice with  
brown rice



**Replace**  
white bread with  
whole wheat



**Replace**  
a donut with  
bran muffin



**Replace**  
sour cream with  
hummus



**Replace**  
pudding with  
apple sauce



## Constipation

Some people complain of being constipated after having a baby. If this is a concern, check with your health care provider. Your digestive system may slow down a bit after giving birth which can lead to constipation. Constipation is also caused by not eating enough fiber-rich foods, not getting enough activity, not drinking enough liquids, and some medications.

What to do? Eat regular meals with a variety of foods high in fiber. Be sure to also drink lots of liquids, especially water, and be active every day.





# Tell Me More About Water

Water is a nutrient we tend to forget about but need for good health. Water keeps the body balanced, keeps your temperature normal, protects your body's tissues, and gets rid of waste. Your body will need more water in hot weather, when you are sick, and when exercising.

## Tips to help you drink more water:

- Drink water with every snack and meal.
- Keep a bottle of water with you in your car, at your desk, and in your bag.
- Put fresh or frozen fruit in your water to add flavor.





# Simple Tips for a Healthy Body

Pregnancy changes your body in unexpected ways. After you have had a chance to rest and recover, you can start to think about building a strong, healthy body. Think about making small, simple changes you know you can do and feel accomplished.







# Fitting in Physical Activity

Physical activity is important for stress relief, weight control, bone and heart health, flexibility, and muscle tone. Physical activity can also improve mood, sleep and reduce stress. Try adding an outdoor activity to your day such as walking the dog, playing with the kids in the park, or raking leaves. Or, add an indoor activity like, cleaning the house, dancing, or taking the stairs instead of the elevator.



## Before starting any new activity:

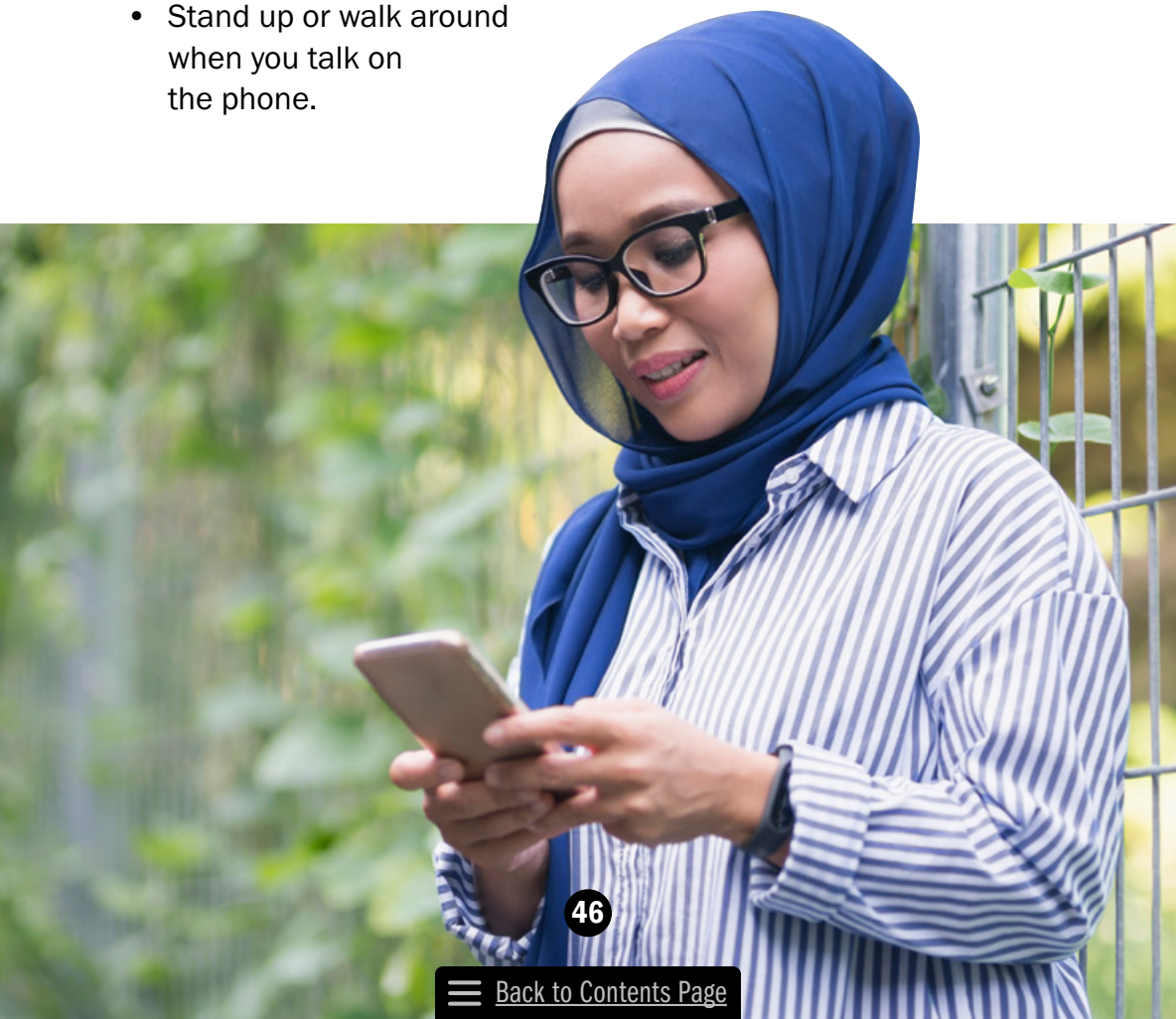
- Check with your health care provider, especially if you are pregnant or had a cesarian birth.
- Do not overdo it, start slow.
- Always warm up with a light activity before exercising and be sure to cool down and stretch after.
- Drink plenty of water.



# Keep Moving

Did you know that sitting for long periods of time can lead to multiple health problems? [Movement](#) throughout the day helps keep: your blood flowing, your mind working at its best, your mood better, and your muscles relaxed.

- Dance, do some sit ups, or walk in place to make watching TV active.
- Take a stretch break every hour. Set a reminder on your phone.
- Go for a walk during part of your lunch.
- Stand up or walk around when you talk on the phone.





# Planning for Your Next Baby

You just had a baby, so you may feel it is too soon to talk about whether or not you will have another one. However, it is a good idea to take some time to think about your plans before you have your next baby. Having a plan will help you have a happier, less stressful experience.





# Spacing Between Pregnancies

Planning the spacing of your babies gives your body time to prepare for your next baby. By waiting at least 18 months between pregnancies you will have time for your body to fully heal and reach a healthy weight.





# Finding a Healthy Weight for Your Body

**Being at a healthy weight for your body type can make pregnancy and labor go more smoothly.** Also, your unborn baby is more likely to be healthy and face fewer weight problems later in life. Every body type is different. Some tools, like Body Mass Index (BMI) may overestimate or underestimate body fat for some people. BMI does not take into account muscle or bone size. Being active regularly and eating a diet full of vegetables, fruits, lean protein foods, nonfat or low fat dairy, and whole grains will help you move towards a strong, healthy body.



# Keep Taking Your Prenatal Vitamins

It is a great idea to finish taking all your prenatal vitamins. If you are thinking about getting pregnant again, start taking prenatal vitamins before you become pregnant. These vitamins have extra iron, calcium, Vitamin D, DHA, and more, which are all important nutrients for your future baby.





# Resources



# Nutrition, Recipes and Healthy Eating

- [www.myfamily.wic.ca.gov](http://www.myfamily.wic.ca.gov)
- [www.myplate.gov](http://www.myplate.gov)
- [www.eatfresh.org](http://www.eatfresh.org)
- [wichealth.org](http://wichealth.org). Ask your WIC counselor how to sign up for online nutrition education classes.

## Baby Blues/Postpartum Depression

### California Department of Public Health

- [www.cdph.ca.gov/maternalmentalhealth](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/maternalmentalhealth)

### Postpartum Support International (PSI) Helpline— Find Local Resources

- [www.postpartum.net](http://www.postpartum.net)
- **Helpline:** 1-800-944-4PPD (773)
- Text “Help” to 800-944-4773 (English)
- Text en Español: 971-203-7773
- The PSI Helpline does not handle emergencies. Call 911 if you are in an emergency.

### Helpline for anyone experiencing depression during or after pregnancy

- Available support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for mothers and their family or friends. Offers support, information and referrals. 1-800-773-6667 (1-800-PPD-MOMS)
- Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week



## Men with partners who have perinatal depression

- [www.postpartumdads.org](http://www.postpartumdads.org)

## March of Dimes

- General information about postpartum depression
- [www.marchofdimes.org/pregnancy/postpartum-care.aspx](http://www.marchofdimes.org/pregnancy/postpartum-care.aspx)

## National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

- The Lifeline provides 24-hours a day, 7 days a week, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones.
- [www.988lifeline.org](http://www.988lifeline.org)
- **Hotline:** 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

## Breastfeeding Support

- Talk to your WIC Counselor to find breastfeeding support groups or individual support in your local area.

## La Leche League International

- [www.llli.org](http://www.llli.org)

## Domestic Violence

### National Domestic Violence Hotline

- [www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org)
- **Hotline:** 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

# Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Treatment Locator

SAMHSA's National Helpline is a free, confidential, 24-hour a day, 365-day-a-year treatment referral and information service. It is available in English and Spanish for individuals and families facing mental or substance use disorders.

- [www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov](http://www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov)
- 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

## Adverse Childhood Experiences

### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- Information on the negative impact adverse childhood experiences can have on health, education, and work.
- [www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/aces/pdf/vs-1105-aces-H.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/aces/pdf/vs-1105-aces-H.pdf)



# Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS)

Since you are pregnant or have recently had a baby, we would like to know how you are feeling. Please check the answer that comes closest to how you have felt **in the past 7 days**, not just how you feel today.

## 1. I have blamed myself unnecessarily when things went wrong

- ☐ Yes, most of the time (3)
- ☐ Yes, some of the time (2)
- ☐ Not very often (1)
- ☐ No, never (0)

## 2. I have been anxious or worried for no good reason

- ☐ Yes, very often (3)
- ☐ Yes, sometimes (2)
- ☐ Hardly ever (1)
- ☐ No, not at all (0)

## 3. I have felt scared or panicky for no very good reason

- ☐ Yes, quite a lot (3)
- ☐ Yes, sometimes (2)
- ☐ No, not much (1)
- ☐ No, not at all (0)

# EPDS-3 Scoring Guide

Each response has a point score next to it. Total the points next to each response you chose for the 3 questions. This is your overall score. The EDPS-3 has a maximum overall potential score of 9.

A score of 3 or higher may indicate the presence of depression and further clinical assessment by a health care provider is needed. A score of 6 or higher indicates a higher probability of depression. Ask WIC for a referral for mental health support and share your score with your health care provider.

**The EPDS-3 should be used as a screening tool only. Share your score with a trusted health care provider so they can further assess you.**

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**Source:** Cox, J.L., Holden, J.M., and Sagovsky, R. 1987. Detection of postnatal depression: Development of the 10-item Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale. British Journal of Psychiatry 150:782-786. Used with permission.



**California Department of Public Health, California WIC program**

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**1-888-942-9675 | [MyFamily.WIC.ca.gov](https://MyFamily.WIC.ca.gov)**

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