

Prenatal Pictorial Resources



Developed by Registered Dietitians

October 2023

Land Acknowledgement

We are privileged to acknowledge our work takes place on historical and contemporary Indigenous lands, including the territories of Treaty 6, Treaty 7 & Treaty 8 and the homeland of the Metis Nation Of Alberta and 8 Metis Settlements.

We are grateful for the reciprocal relationships Indigenous peoples have had with the lands, the water, plants and animals, from which we all gain nourishment and medicine to maintain life.

Nutrition Services in AHS is committed to reconciliation and working towards achieving health equity with and for Indigenous peoples in Alberta.

Background

- Resources are intended to facilitate discussions
- Designed to be simple and culturally inclusive
- Aim to enhance knowledge on key nutrition-related topics

Prenatal Pictorial Resources

5 Products to guide nutrition conversations with clients:

- Iron Foods for Pregnancy
- Dairy Foods for Pregnancy
- Eating Fish in Pregnancy
- Multivitamins in Pregnancy
- Food Safety Conversation Cards



Iron Foods for Pregnancy

Iron Foods for Pregnancy

Iron helps give you energy. Iron helps your baby's body and brain grow.
Eat foods with iron every day. Take your prenatal vitamin daily.

Animal foods with iron	Wild meat (moose, elk, venison)	Pork		
	Lamb and goat	Egg	Chicken, turkey, goose, and duck	
	Fish, light tuna, shellfish (cooked)		Beef	
Plant foods with iron	Fortified grains and flours, hot or cold cereal		Chickpeas, beans, and lentils	
	Nuts (pistachio, almond, cashew) and nut butters (almond, peanut)		Seeds (pumpkin, chia, sesame) and seed butters (tahini)	
	Peas	Spinach (cooked)	Edamame (soybeans)	Dried fruit

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 404257-NFS

Vitamin C and Iron

Vitamin C can help you get the most iron out of your foods. Use canned, fresh, or frozen foods.

Peppers	Apples	Tomatoes and tomato sauce	Broccoli	Lemons and oranges	Berries
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Ways to include iron at meals and snacks:

Iron foods are **bolded**. Eat foods high in vitamin C with your high iron foods.

Hummus with lemon and pita	Bean and lentil soup with peppers	Tuna sandwich with vegetables	Moose meat stew with potatoes
Curry with goat, chickpeas, or lentils and tomatoes	Pork congee with bok choy on the side	Stir-fry with tofu or meat and broccoli	Cold cereal with berries

What happens if I think I have low iron?

If you think you have low iron, talk to your healthcare team. Your healthcare team can check your iron levels with a blood test.

My plan:

To learn more, visit the *Healthy Parents Healthy Children* website (healthyparentshealthychildren.ca) | If you have questions about iron, call 811. Ask to talk to a dietitian.

Iron Foods in Pregnancy | Page 2 of 2 | 404257-NFS (Sep 2021)
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Multivitamins in Pregnancy

Take a Multivitamin When Pregnant

When you are pregnant, it is hard to get all the nutrients you need from the food you eat.



To help you remember daily



Choose a multivitamin

Health Canada recommends taking a daily multivitamin with 16–20 mg iron and 0.4 mg folic acid (folate). Multivitamins with these exact amounts can be hard to find.

Look for these amounts when choosing a multivitamin:

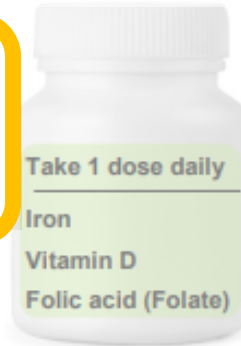
- **Iron** between 16–27 mg
- **Vitamin D** at least 400 IU (10 mcg)
- **Folic acid (Folate)** between 0.4–1 mg (400–1000 mcg)

✓ These amounts are safe in pregnancy.

If you have questions about multivitamins in the store, talk to the pharmacist.



Some multivitamins may be missing a nutrient. Most gummy multivitamins **do not have iron**.



Use a pill box



Take it before you go to sleep

Mineral needs



For questions, call 811. Ask to talk to a dietitian.

404285-NFS (Jan 2023)

Dairy Foods for Pregnancy

Dairy Foods for Pregnancy

Dairy foods help your baby grow.

They give you and your baby: protein, calcium, and vitamin D.

Choose dairy foods at meals and snacks.

Dairy foods



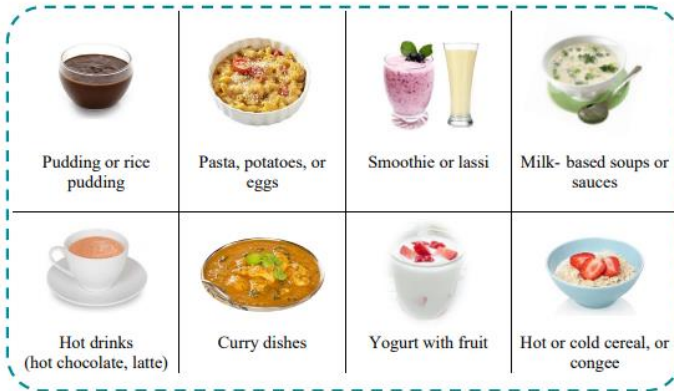
Milk or canned milk

Hard cheese or heated paneer

Yogurt, yogurt drinks, or kefir

Skim milk powder

Ways to include dairy at meals and snacks



Pudding or rice pudding

Pasta, potatoes, or eggs

Smoothie or lassi

Milk-based soups or sauces

Hot drinks (hot chocolate, latte)

Curry dishes

Yogurt with fruit

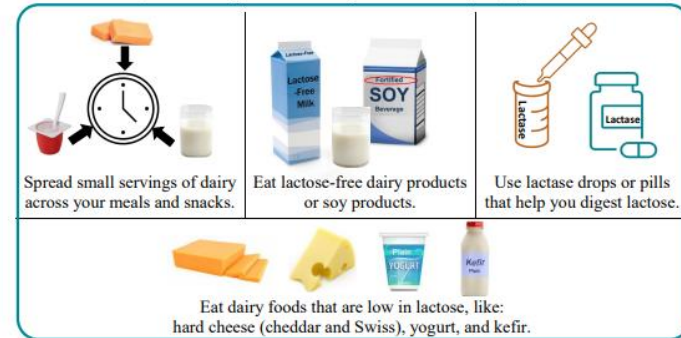
Hot or cold cereal, or congee



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Lactose intolerance

Some people get an upset stomach when they drink milk or eat dairy foods. This is often because of lactose, a natural sugar found in dairy foods. If this is you, try to:



Spread small servings of dairy across your meals and snacks.

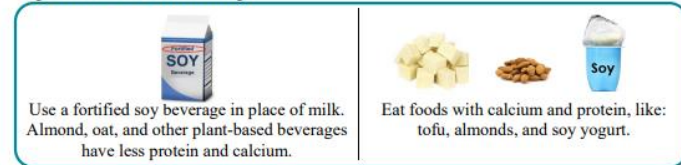
Eat lactose-free dairy products or soy products.

Use lactase drops or pills that help you digest lactose.



Eat dairy foods that are low in lactose, like: hard cheese (cheddar and Swiss), yogurt, and kefir.

If you do not eat dairy



Use a fortified soy beverage in place of milk. Almond, oat, and other plant-based beverages have less protein and calcium.

Eat foods with calcium and protein, like: tofu, almonds, and soy yogurt.

My plan:



To learn more, visit the *Healthy Parents Healthy Children* website (healthyparentshealthychildren.ca)

If you have questions about dairy, call 811. Ask to talk to a dietitian.

Dairy Foods for Pregnancy © 2021 Alberta Health Services, Nutrition Services
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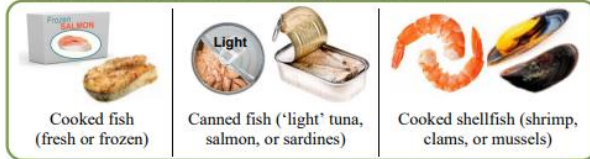
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Eating Fish in Pregnancy

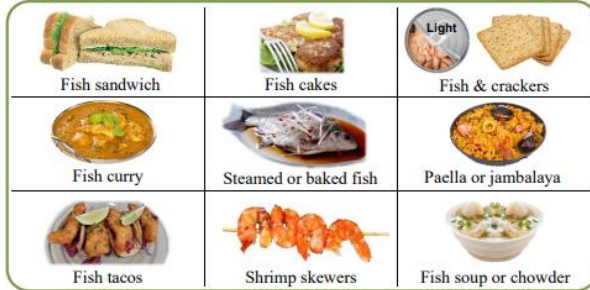
Eating Fish in Pregnancy

Eat fish to help your baby's eyes and brain grow.
Fish gives you and your baby omega-3 fats (healthy fats), protein, and vitamin D.
Most fish and shellfish are safe to eat in pregnancy.

Choose fish at least 2 times each week ✓



Ways to eat fish at meals or snacks ✓



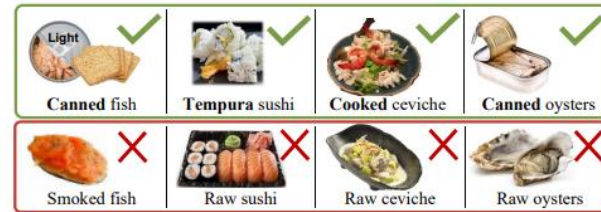
If you do not eat fish

Ask your healthcare team about other ways to get omega-3 fats.



Choose cooked or canned fish

Raw, undercooked, and smoked fish can be unsafe for you and your baby.



Avoid high mercury fish

Mercury is a metal found in nature. Some fish have more mercury than others do.
Too much mercury can harm your baby's brain.

Avoid these fish while you are pregnant



If you eat tuna, choose 'light' tuna



For information on fish caught in Alberta lakes or rivers, check aepin.alberta.ca/ShouldIEatThisFish

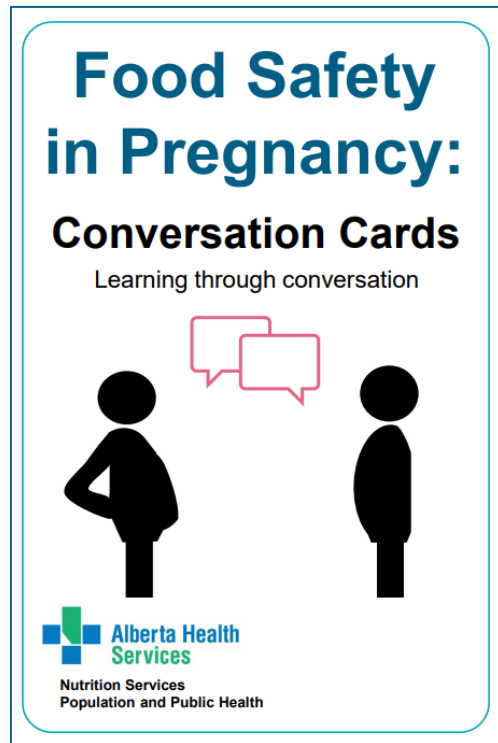


To learn more, visit the *Healthy Parents Healthy Children* website (healthyparentshealthychildren.ca)

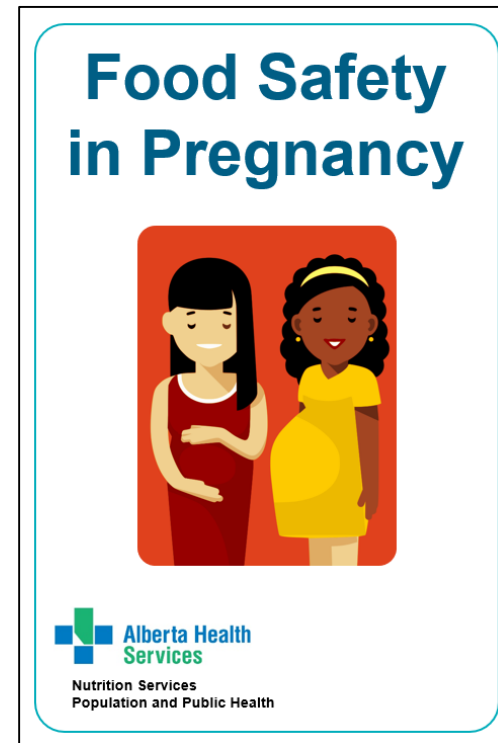
If you have questions about fish, call 811. Ask to talk to a dietitian.

Food Safety Conversation Cards

Care provider version
to use with clients



Client version to
navigate themselves



Both versions available [online](#)

Prenatal Pictorial Resources

How to Use Conversation Cards

Use these cards to help you and your client talk about food safety in pregnancy.

With your client:

- Explain why food safety is important in pregnancy:
 - Your immune system is weaker while you are pregnant. This makes it easier to get sick from the bacteria in certain foods.
 - Some substances are passed onto your baby through the placenta.
- Briefly show your client the **menu of cards**.
- Have your **client choose** which card(s) they want to learn about.
- **Click** on the chosen card and use the information provided to guide your discussion.
- To return to the Menu of Cards, click on the **home** button.
- If your clients wants more information, click on the **information icon** to go to the Resources card.



Resources

For more information, visit:



Environmental Public Health
ahs.ca/EPH



Healthy Parents, Healthy Children:
Healthy Eating and Food Safety
healthyparentshealthychildren.ca



Healthy Parents, Healthy Children:
Breastfeeding Your Baby
healthyparentshealthychildren.ca



Nutrition Handouts
ahs.ca/NutritionHandouts



Nutrition Guidelines
ahs.ca/NutritionGuidelinesHP



Should I Eat This Fish:
Fish caught in Alberta lakes and rivers
aepin.alberta.ca/ShouldIEatThisFish/

Menu of Cards



Caffeine

 Alberta Health Services
Nutrition Services
Population and Public Health



Tea

 Alberta Health Services
Nutrition Services
Population and Public Health



Sugar Substitutes

 Alberta Health Services
Nutrition Services
Population and Public Health



Deli Meats & Wieners

 Alberta Health Services
Nutrition Services
Population and Public Health



Cheese

 Alberta Health Services
Nutrition Services
Population and Public Health



**Raw Meat,
Fish, Shellfish,
& Eggs**

 Alberta Health Services
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Mercury in Fish

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**Sprouts &
Unpasteurized
Juice**

 Alberta Health Services
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Population and Public Health




**Preparing
Food Safely**

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Preparing Food Safely



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Preparing Food Safely

1. Clean

- Wash your hands.
- Rinse vegetables/fruits well with safe drinkable water.
- Use clean cutting boards, dishes, and counters.



2. Separate

- Keep raw meat separate from other foods.



3. Cook

- Defrost frozen foods in the fridge or microwave and cook them right away.
- Do not defrost meat on the counter.
- Cook foods to the right temperature to kill bacteria that can make you sick.



4. Chill

- Keep cold foods cold.
- Put leftovers in the fridge
- **within 2 hours** of being cooked.





Caffeine



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Caffeine

Too much caffeine can harm your baby.


Aim for **300 mg or less of caffeine daily** from **all** foods and drinks.

Examples of 300 mg caffeine include:

- 6 cups (1500 mL) of black or green tea
- **or**
- 2 cups (500 mL) coffee






500 mL
2 cups



750 mL
3 cups

Energy drinks are **not recommended** in pregnancy because of caffeine and other ingredients.





Tea



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Tea

You can safely drink up to **3 cups** (750 mL) of these **herbal teas** per day:



Ginger root



Peppermint



Orange peel



Rose hip

Black and green teas without herbs are **safe**.
These teas have **caffeine**.

See the Caffeine card for more information.

✗ Other herbal teas may be unsafe.





Sugar Substitutes

Sugar Substitutes

Sugar substitutes are found in food and drinks, like:



Sweetener packages



Diet pop



"No Sugar Added" candy & syrup

Most sugar substitutes are safe during pregnancy, such as:

- ✓ Aspartame
- ✓ Sucralose
- ✓ Xylitol, sorbitol, mannitol, and other sugar alcohols
- ✓ Stevia
- ✓ Acesulfame-K



Limit SWEET'N LOW® and Sugar Twin® to **2 packages daily** as their safety is unknown.





Deli Meats & Wieners



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Deli Meats & Wieners

Wieners or 'hot dogs' and some deli meats may have harmful bacteria. This may make you sick and could harm your baby.

Heat packaged and store-sliced deli meats **until steaming hot** to make them safe to eat.



It is **safe** to eat **dried** and **salted** deli meats without heating, like:

✓ salami ✓ pepperoni





Cheese

Cheese

Cheese may have harmful bacteria. This may make you sick and could harm your baby.

✓ Hard **pasteurized** cheeses and processed cheeses are safe to eat.
Examples:



Cheddar



Gouda



Swiss



Parmesan



Cottage cheese



Cheese slices


⚠ Heat soft **pasteurized** cheeses **until they steam**. These include:




- Brie
- Feta
- Queso Fresco
- Havarti
- Goat
- Paneer
- Gorgonzola
- Mozzarella

✗ Avoid all **unpasteurized** cheese.





Raw Meat, Fish, Shellfish, & Eggs


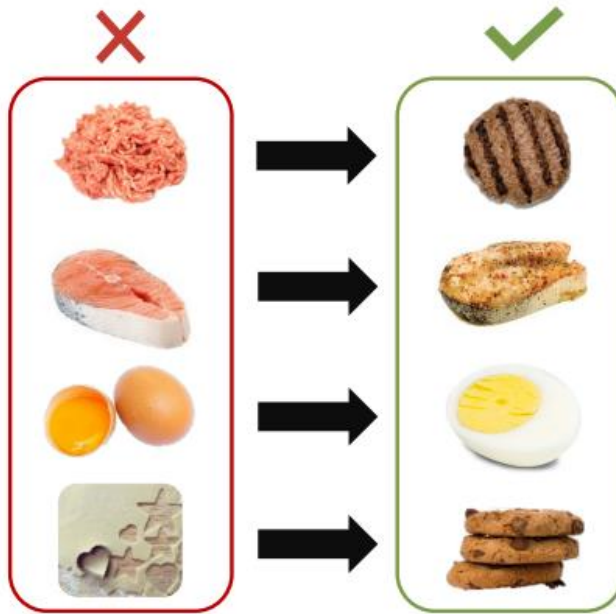


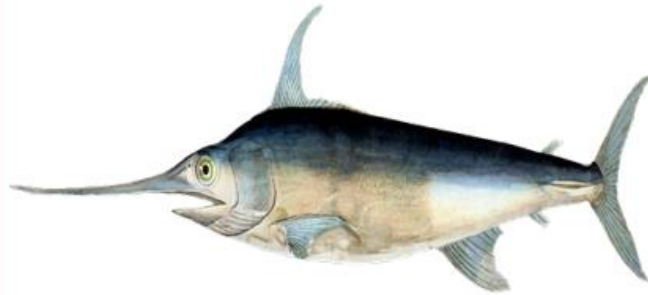
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Raw Meat, Fish, Shellfish, & Eggs

Some raw, smoked, or lightly cooked foods can have harmful bacteria. This may make you sick and could harm your baby.

Cook these foods well.





Mercury in Fish



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Mercury in Fish

✓ Most fish and shellfish have safe amounts of mercury.

They are **safe** to eat when you are pregnant.



✗ Avoid these fish while you are pregnant:

- Escolar
- Marlin
- Shark
- Swordfish
- Canned 'white' tuna
- Fresh or frozen tuna
- Orange roughy



Limit or avoid some fish caught in Alberta lakes or rivers.

For more information, see the 'Resources' card.





Sprouts & Unpasteurized Juice

Sprouts & Unpasteurized Juice

Sprouts and unpasteurized drinks may have harmful bacteria. This may make you sick and could harm your baby.



Choose fruit and vegetable juices and ciders with the word **"pasteurized"** on the label.



Avoid eating sprouts, such as:



Alfalfa sprouts




Bean sprouts (Mung bean)



Radish sprouts

Cooking does not make sprouts safer.





Caffeine

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Tea

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Population and Public Health



Deli Meats & Wieners

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Mercury in Fish

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Population and Public Health



Cheese

Alberta Health Services
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Sprouts & Unpasteurized Juice

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Sugar Substitutes

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Preparing Food Safely

Alberta Health Services
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Raw Meat, Fish, Shellfish, & Eggs

Alberta Health Services
Nutrition Services
Population and Public Health

To receive a set of Food Safety
Conversation Cards, contact Erin
Bligh.

Phone: 587-338-0953

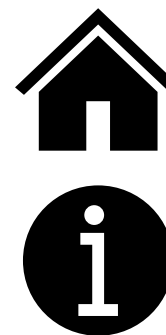
Email: erin.bligh@sac-isc.gc.ca

Menu of Cards

What would you like to talk about today?

 Caffeine	 Tea	 Sugar Substitutes
 Deli Meats & Wieners	 Cheese	 Raw Meat, Fish, Shellfish, & Eggs
 Mercury in Fish	 Sprouts & Unpasteurized Juice	 Preparing Food Safely

Link to Virtual Format:
Scan this QR code with
your phone camera





Healthy Eating Starts Here

[Nutrition for Pregnancy & Lactation](#)

[Healthy Eating at Early Learning & Child Care Centres](#)

[Healthy Eating at School](#)

[Healthy Eating at Work](#)

[Healthy Eating in the Community](#)

[Healthy Eating Resources](#)

[Healthy Food Checker](#)

Nutrition for Pregnancy & Lactation Information for Albertans

You can use this information to help support you before, during and after your pregnancy.

You will find handouts on important nutrition topics, practical information about eating during pregnancy and lactation, and learn how you can speak with a dietitian.

Nutrition Handouts

Resources created by AHS dietitians:

- [Dairy Foods for Pregnancy](#)
- [Eating Fish in Pregnancy](#)
- [Iron Foods for Pregnancy](#)
- [Nutrition when Pregnant with Twins, Triplets, or More](#)
- [Take a Multivitamin when Pregnant](#)

Visit [Nutrition Education](#) for more easy-to-access nutrition information. Search Topic – Pregnancy, Lactation and Breastfeeding.

Related Resources

- Alberta CAPC/CPNP Coalition
 - [Project Directory](#) - find Community Action Programs for Children (CAPC)/Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Programs (CPNP)
- Alberta Environmental Public Health Information Network



Speak with a Dietitian

Health Link has dietitians available to answer your nutrition questions. Call 811 or visit ahs.ca/811.

[More >](#)

Find Workshops & Classes

Nutrition Services offers a variety of free virtual group nutrition workshops and classes that are facilitated by AHS dietitians. Search Topic – Pregnancy & Breastfeeding.

[More >](#)





Publication & Public Health Nutrition

Nutrition for Pregnancy & Lactation

Malnutrition

Food Insecurity

Newcomer Nutrition Education
Toolkit

Nutrition for Pregnancy & Lactation Information for Health Professionals

[Referring Your Client](#) | [Provider Resources](#) | [Learning Opportunities](#) | [Client Resources](#)

Evidence-based nutrition information and tools to guide conversations with clients who are pregnant or lactating and their families.

Referring Your Client

Nutrition Services

[Referring Patients for Nutrition Services](#) - for individuals who may need extra guidance to meet their nutrition needs during pregnancy or who have a medical condition that is impacted by nutrition.

- Learn more: [Nutrition Guideline: Referral to a Registered Dietitian](#)

Free Workshops & Classes

Refer clients to [Find Nutrition Services Workshops & Classes](#) - virtual group nutrition workshops and classes that are facilitated by AHS dietitians. Search Topic – Pregnancy & Breastfeeding.






Provider Resources

Tools to Support Your Practice



AHS Public Health Dietitians



-  North Zone
publichealthnutrition.northzone@ahs.ca
-  Edmonton Zone
publichealthnutritionedmonton@ahs.ca
-  Central Zone
publichealthnutrition.centralzone@ahs.ca
-  Calgary Zone
publichealthnutrition.calgaryzone@ahs.ca
-  South Zone
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Thank you & Questions

