

SELF-PACED LESSON

After reading this lesson, click the survey link at the end to answer a few questions and receive nutrition education credit for your class.

## Balance Carbohydrate, Protein and Fat During Pregnancy and Lactation



Commonly Asked Questions

**Before I was pregnant, I was eating low carb, high fat and high protein. Is that good for me to continue during pregnancy?**

Even though eating low carb, high fat and high protein has been trendy lately, eating a good balance of all those nutrients is important to help you be healthy and have a healthy baby.

**What should my carbohydrate intake be during pregnancy; and is it the same for breastfeeding?**

While the exact amount of carbohydrate needed during pregnancy varies for each woman, the recommended amount is 175 grams per day, even for those with diabetes. Choosing healthy carbohydrates, such as whole grains, fruits, beans, lentils and other starchy vegetables, will help you meet your carbohydrate needs and give you the additional benefit of fiber.

The recommendation for carbohydrate during breastfeeding is a bit higher than it is for pregnancy. It is 210 grams per day - even for women with diabetes. For information on how you can meet your carbohydrate needs for pregnancy and breastfeeding, complete the [“Get Your Plan”](#) portion on [MyPlate.gov](#).



**I have been eating at least 100 grams of protein per day. Is that amount still about right for pregnancy and breastfeeding?**

As in the case of carbohydrates, the precise amount of protein needed during pregnancy and lactation will vary among women. However, the recommendation for both is 71 grams per day. By eating a balanced diet, including 3 servings of dairy and 6-7 oz of meat each day, you can reach this goal.

To help curb my hunger on the low carbohydrate diet that I have been following, I have been eating plenty of bacon, sausage, chicharrones, nuts and avocado. Is that still a good plan?

While there is no daily value set for the total amount of fat recommended during pregnancy or lactation, there are some recommendations for fat intake. Saturated fat (which is found mostly in animal sources) should be limited to 7-10% of calories per day. Choosing the nuts and avocado over the bacon, sausage and chicharrones, will help you limit that saturated fat, while giving you some healthy fat that you and your baby need.

Eating fatty fish (canned salmon, light tuna, sardines, Atlantic mackerel, and chub mackerel) provided by the WIC program will give you the wonderful omega-3 fatty acids that are so good for you and your baby. The American Heart Association recommends that



all Americans eat two 3 oz servings of fish (especially the fatty fish like the ones listed above) per week. Just remember to always limit your total fish intake to no more than 12 oz in a week due to the mercury found in fish.

Adding some chia or flaxseed to oatmeal and smoothies would further boost your intake of healthy fat and fiber. Nutrients are important to help you be healthy and have a healthy baby.

**Congratulations, you have finished!**

Have more questions? Contact your local WIC nutritionist!

**STOP!**

**[Click here to complete the survey and receive credit](#)**



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