



12.

Food for the Baby

BREAST FEEDING YOUR BABY is an important stage in the sequence of events of motherhood. The responsibilities of the mother's body do not end with the birth of her baby. They go on even more intensively during the nursing period. Now you actually can see, as well as know, how vital you are to your baby. Many medical authorities consider that breast feeding has highly important physiological and psychological values to both mother and baby.

Whether or not you can nurse your baby successfully depends chiefly on your health, your diet before and after the baby is born, and your interest and satisfaction in being able to nurse him.

AT THE HOSPITAL

Sometimes the rigid schedule of the hospital prevents the early relationship of mother and infant which is needed to start satisfactory milk production and nursing. For a closer personal relationship between mother and baby, some hospitals are keeping a baby in the same room with his mother instead of in a nursery. This is called a "rooming-in" plan. A mother is more likely to have plenty of milk if she has the satisfaction and pleasure of holding and loving the baby often, taking care of him, and feeding him whenever he is hungry than if she sees and feeds him only by a hospital schedule.



If you do not have enough milk for the baby while you are in the hospital, try not to be discouraged. This alone can reduce your milk supply. You can look forward to having more milk after you go home with your baby and are able to care for him and yourself.

VERY SPECIAL

Nothing can quite equal the advantages of breast feeding when mother and baby are healthy. Milk from a healthy mother is more easily digested and thus less likely to cause digestive upsets than the usual formulas of bottle-fed babies. Mother's milk is always the right temperature, it is free of harmful bacteria, and it is more economical of the mother's time and energy.

For the first three or four days after the baby is born,

the secretion of the breasts is not milk but a substance called *colostrum*. Colostrum is of very special value to the newborn infant as he starts to nourish his own body because it contains more protein and salts than milk, as well as certain substances which give the baby resistance to infection; also, it acts as a laxative. For about two weeks the milk keeps some of the qualities of this colostrum.

No mother should feel that all is lost if she cannot or does not nurse her baby. She can do several things to compensate for feeding her baby by bottle and formula (which the doctor has prescribed). When giving him his bottle she should cuddle him close as though she were breast feeding him. This will give him the necessary sense of nearness and belonging. She should allow plenty of time so that she can feel unhurried and relaxed and enjoy this time with her baby. The spirit in which she feeds him counts as well as the kind of milk she gives him.

FOOD FOR TWO

A baby requires more of all the nutrients and food energy after he is born. He needs energy for his own breathing, his heart action, muscle tone, and all of his activity. His body is made up of very active tissue, and he is growing faster than he ever will again. He needs 45 to 50 Calories for each pound each day during his first year. Contrast this with your own requirement of about 16 to 20 Calories for each pound! Now you need more food to nurse your baby successfully than you needed for his growth before he was born.

Compared with the dietary allowances for you before

you were pregnant, your food should supply more than twice as much calcium and vitamin C, and two-thirds more protein, riboflavin, and vitamin A, as well as small increases of the other nutrients and calories.

Your daily food selections must now include additional servings of the food groups which are the chief sources of these nutrients.

To supply the extra calcium, protein, and riboflavin you now need to *add* 4 cups of milk, which means a total of 6 cups of milk each day. You can eat cheese and ice cream to supply some of this amount.

To supply more vitamin C you now need to *add* 2 servings of fruits that are good sources of this vitamin. This means a total of 3 servings each day. You can eat fair sources of vitamin C to supply some of this vitamin, but it takes 2 of these servings to replace 1 serving of a good source.

To supply more vitamin A you need a serving of dark-green or deep-yellow vegetable every day.

To meet your increased demands for the other nutrients and for calories choose more servings from the Bread-Cereal Group and the Meat Group. You need to include plenty of water and other liquids too.

Now the Basic Menu Pattern for you must include all of these servings of the foods which are so important to you and your baby. As with the other patterns, it is the foundation of your daily diet. You will need to add other foods and more of the same foods until your need for energy is supplied.

If you are still a teen-ager, add the extra servings specified from the four food groups to the Basic Menu Pattern given for you in Chapter 14. Then your food



BASIC MENU PATTERN FOR A NURSING MOTHER

This pattern is not a complete daily menu. It is an assortment of foods that will supply the major part of your needs for good nutrition. To this you can add other foods to round out your meals or snacks and to satisfy your calorie need.

<i>Food Group</i>	<i>Number of Servings*</i>	<i>Example of the Kind of Food</i>
BREAKFAST		
Vegetable-Fruit		
A good source of vitamin C	1	Grapefruit juice
Bread-Cereal	2	Cereal cooked in milk
		Toast
Meat	½	Egg
Milk	1	Milk—one cup
MORNING SNACK		
Milk	1	Milk—one cup
Bread-Cereal	½	Graham crackers
LUNCH OR SUPPER		
Meat	1	Ground beef pattie
Bread-Cereal	1	Bread
Vegetable-Fruit		
A good source of vitamin C	1	Strawberries
Milk	1	Milk—one cup
AFTERNOON SNACK		
Vegetable-Fruit		
A good source of vitamin C	1	Orange
Milk	1	Cheese—one-inch cube
Bread-Cereal	½	Crackers
DINNER		
Meat	1	Roast lamb
Vegetable-Fruit		
A good source of vitamin A	1	Spinach
every day		Scalloped potatoes
Other	2	Raw vegetable or fruit salad
Bread-Cereal	1	Hot roll
Milk	1	Milk—one-half cup
		¼ serving in scalloped potatoes
		¼ serving as ice cream
BEDTIME SNACK		
Milk	1	Chocolate milk—one cup
Vegetable-Fruit	1	Banana

Also include some butter or margarine and other fat (see Chapter 10, Fats in Foods).

The servings that are listed will supply between 2,200 to 2,500 Calories, depending upon the kinds of foods you choose from each food group. Using skim milk in place of whole milk will reduce the calories by about 440 Calories.

*The size of servings is given in the Daily Food Guide section, beginning on page 93.

will supply enough body-building materials for both you and your baby.

Snacks between meals and at bedtime are advisable for refueling and renourishing your body. They also help you include all of the foods you need every day without having to crowd too much food into each meal.

The quality of your milk depends on the food you eat and on the stores of nutrients you have in your body. The supplies of protein and calcium that you stored during pregnancy will be used now. You need them in addition to the large amounts supplied daily by the food you eat. Your doctor may prescribe vitamin D for both you and the baby. Also, he probably will have you give the baby a little orange juice for extra vitamin C beginning some time during the first month.

CALORIES FOR TWO

Your total calorie need changes as the baby grows. Your food should supply enough calories to keep your weight normal plus enough for the milk the baby needs to thrive on.

From the information on page 87 find how many calories you need daily for your size and activity level. To this need, add 800 to 1,000 Calories for the production of milk. Experience, and weighing of yourself as well as the baby frequently, will guide you in knowing how much extra to eat. You will need to eat as much as you possibly can without gaining weight.

When part of the milk the baby needs is provided by a formula and you are producing only the remaining part, you will need fewer calories than if you were supplying all of the milk.

FACTS FOR YOU

Your doctor can tell you many things about your milk and its production that will help you to be successful in nursing your baby. For instance, nursing stimulates milk secretion; also, emptying the breast completely at each nursing stimulates secretion. The accumulation of milk in the breast, however, discourages secretion. Heavy work, fatigue, or lack of sleep also reduce the secretion. Your milk is richer in the morning after a night's rest than at night after a day's activity. For this reason you may need to shorten the time between nursings or let the baby nurse a little longer at feedings toward the end of the day.

The flavor of spices and condiments in your food is transferred to your milk and may upset the baby. You will want to avoid these. Occasionally, strong-flavored vegetables such as onions and cauliflower are troublesome in the same way.

Emotional factors have a great influence on your ability to produce milk for your baby. Being worried or excited or getting too tired interferes with both the quantity and quality of your milk. But being calm, happy, and affectionate stimulates milk production.

BABY KNOWS

Babies differ in how much and how often they need to be fed. For this reason their schedules need to be personalized. A personalized schedule does not mean feeding a baby every time he cries, but it does mean considering him as an individual who wants to be comfortable and happy but cannot be when he is hungry or thirsty. It means respecting a certain amount of



variation in his hunger and appetite and not insisting on too rigid a feeding pattern either in the amount he eats or in the time between feedings.

A healthy baby is a better judge of when he needs food than a clock is. He will develop a fairly regular daily schedule when he is getting enough to eat, whether breast fed or bottle fed. The schedule may start at a different time each day, but the time between feedings will be similar from day to day. If he is hungry during the night, he needs to be fed and will let you know. He will break himself of a night feeding when he no longer needs such frequent refueling. But when he is not fed during the night, he is hungrier when he wakes up, so he needs to be fed promptly. The first two feedings in the morning may need to be quite close together.

A hungry baby spends a good share of his life expressing his outrage at the clock and the people who watch it instead of him. Persistent crying does not always mean that he has colic; it may be his expression of anger at not being fed when he needs food.



The doctor will tell you when to add other foods to the baby's diet. The amounts must be kept small, especially for the first six months. When a baby is fed too much of the solid foods, he may lose his interest in milk and not take enough of it. Also he may eat too much and be fat. New foods must never take the place of any of the milk he needs.

You probably will wean the baby some time after he is six months old. Even if you have nursed him for only a month or two, both of you have benefited. After the baby is weaned, you will have to eat less — only

enough food for your own body now — or you will gain weight!

AN ANSWER BOOK

For the months ahead you will want a reliable book on infant care and feeding. There are several excellent ones and some of them are available in inexpensive paper-bound editions. Ask your doctor to recommend one. Such a book will answer many of the questions you need or want to ask, particularly with your first baby; then you can call your doctor for answers to the special questions.



