healthy habits for baby and you
tips and helpful advice for a healthy, happy baby

Good for you
and baby too

start 4 life
a healthy baby starts with a healthy pregnancy

Congratulations! Pregnancy is such an exciting time, but it can sometimes feel a bit overwhelming. There’s so much information to take in, and everyone seems to have an opinion on what you should or shouldn’t be doing!

We’re not here to tell you what to do, or how to do it. But we can help you pick up the healthy habits that can help you have a healthy, happy baby and become a healthy, happy family.

You’ll probably have a lot of questions... that’s absolutely natural. Why not write them down in this book so you’re ready next time you see your midwife, health visitor or doctor?

Your name: .................................................................

Your due date: ............................................................

Your midwife’s name and number:

.................................................................
Mmmm!
baby can tell when mum eats well
why eating healthily is so important for your baby's development

It's always a good idea to eat healthily. But now you're pregnant, it matters more than ever. To develop fully, your baby's brain and organs need nutrients every single day. And that means choosing healthy foods over fatty, sugary ones. There are some foods that you need to avoid completely, like raw or partially cooked eggs, some fish and certain meats. For the facts on eating carefully when you're pregnant, go to nhs.uk and search for 'foods to avoid in pregnancy'.

You're bound to put on some weight while you're pregnant due to your baby growing. Putting on too much weight, however, can affect your health and increase your blood pressure. You shouldn't try and diet; just eat healthily and try to stay active.

Being a healthy weight means that it is easier for you to move around in labour and reduces the chance of needing more medical help.

top tip

Feeling extra peckish? A snack is fine, just steer clear of crisps, sweets and chocolates, which are high in fat and sugar. Try some fruit, a calcium-packed low-fat yoghurt or even beans on toast next time you need a snack-fix. You'll feel fuller for longer and less tempted to reach for junk food.

myth buster

"should I eat for two?"

In the past, mums were told to eat for themselves AND their babies. But now we know that's not true. In fact, it's only in the last three months of your pregnancy that you need to eat a little bit more; but we're only talking an extra 200 calories a day. That's the same as two slices of wholegrain toast and margarine.
What shall we eat, Mum?
tasty meals you’ll both love

Filling up on healthy food doesn’t have to be hard work. It’s just about making smart choices for you and your baby.

To start you off, here are some quick and easy meal ideas to see you through the day. Packed with nutrients and vitamins, they’re good for you, and baby too.

breakfast  Serves 4 adults
very berry porridge

what to do:

1. Put the porridge oats and water into a non-stick saucepan. Heat and stir until boiling, then lower the heat and simmer gently, stirring often, for 5 minutes.

2. Spoon the porridge into serving bowls and top each portion with 2 tablespoons of yoghurt. Add the berries and serve.

tip: Lots of breakfast cereals are fortified with extra vitamins and minerals, so they’re an easy way to add vitamins and minerals to your diet. Just make sure you go for the ones with less sugar and salt. A splash of semi-skimmed, skimmed or 1% fat milk is a good supply of calcium, too.

Porridge oats are cheap, fill you up and are much healthier than sugar-coated cereals. This tasty fruity version is a great way to start your day!

ingredients:
150g porridge oats
900ml cold water
8 tbsp low-fat natural yoghurt
100g frozen summer berries or forest fruits, defrosted
lunch  Serves 4 adults

super veggie soup

This hearty soup is packed with vegetables, vitamins and minerals. Broccoli is full of iron and folate, which is especially good for you both.

ingredients:
2 leeks, washed and sliced
250g broccoli, broken into florets
250g potatoes, peeled and chopped
600ml reduced salt vegetable or chicken stock
100g spinach, washed
300ml 1% fat milk
1 pinch ground black pepper

what to do:
1. Put the leeks, broccoli and potatoes into a large saucepan and add the stock.
2. Heat until just boiling, and then turn the heat down low. Cook with the lid on for 15-20 minutes, or until the potatoes are tender.
3. Add the spinach and cook gently for another 2-3 minutes, until the leaves wilt down.
4. Blend the soup to a puree using a handheld stick blender, or pop it in a food processor or blender and whizz until smooth. Add the milk and reheat gently, seasoning with ground black pepper before serving.

tip: Any left over? Cool it, cover it and pop it in the fridge for up to 3 days. Just heat it up thoroughly before serving.
evening meal  Serves 4 adults
fabulous fish pie

Warm and comforting, this fishy dish is a good source of protein. It counts towards your recommended two portions of fish a week, too.

ingredients:
700g potatoes, peeled and diced
425ml 1% fat milk
25g low-fat spread
25g plain flour
2 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped
100g frozen peas
1 pinch ground black pepper
300g coley fillet, thawed if frozen, skinned and cut into chunks
25g reduced fat mature Cheddar cheese, grated

what to do:
1. Preheat the oven to 200°C, fan 180°C, gas mark 6.
2. Boil the potatoes for 15-20 minutes until tender, then drain them and mash with 2 tbsp of the milk.
3. Put the remaining milk, low-fat spread and flour into a saucepan and bring to the boil over a medium heat. Stir it all the time with a small whisk or wooden spoon until the sauce bubbles and thickens. Stir in the parsley, add the peas and season with pepper.
4. Place the chunks of fish in an ovenproof dish, pour the sauce over, then top with mashed potato. Sprinkle the cheese all over the surface.
5. Bake in the middle of the oven for 25-30 minutes, until the top is golden brown. Serve with steamed or boiled broccoli.

tip: Cod, haddock or salmon are great in this pie, too. And look out for a handy (and budget friendly) fish pie mix at the fish counter.
I feel good!
this bump is made for walking
just 30 minutes of activity each day is good for you and your growing baby too

All adults need to be active for 150 minutes a week and this includes pregnant women. Just 30 minutes of walking a day can help keep you and your baby healthy.

Staying fit also helps you keep your energy levels up in the day, and makes it easier to sleep at night. Walking 30 minutes a day (it doesn’t have to be all in one go) also helps prepare your body for labour, reduce swollen hands and feet and avoid varicose veins. It can even make it easier to get your figure back after the birth. So let’s get moving!

myth buster
“shouldn’t I put my feet up?”

Being active won’t put your baby at risk; in fact, it’s really good for you both. Yes, it’s ok to relax every now and then, but when you’re feeling tired a gentle stroll can actually boost your energy. Try it next time you need a lift!

top tip

Ankles and feet can often swell in pregnancy. Ease the puffiness and improve your blood circulation with these easy exercises. You can do them sitting or standing:

- Quickly bend and stretch your foot up and down 30 times
- Circle your foot 8 times in one direction, then 8 times in the other
- Repeat with the other foot

If you continue to have swollen ankles and feet, or have swollen ankles and feet along with headaches or blurred vision, you should see your midwife straightaway as these can be signs of pre eclampsia.

You can find more tips on staying active, including pelvic floor exercises, by searching ‘exercise in pregnancy’ at nhs.uk