

REAL FOOD FOR PREGNANCY

A gentle guide to nourishing the body during pregnancy with food



I highly recommend reading and referencing **Lily Nichol's** book ***Real Food for Pregnancy*** as well as checking out her offerings for parents here:
<https://lilynicholsrdn.com>

Here's a quick list of the most important take-aways to give you a head start:

- **Nutrient density matters most:** Focus on clean sources of whole, unprocessed, nutrient-dense foods—especially animal protein, eggs, seafood, vegetables, healthy fats, nuts, and seeds.
- **Protein is critical:** Pregnant women need more protein than often recommended. Prioritize complete sources (meat, fish, eggs, dairy) for optimal fetal growth and maternal health. Aim for 100-130g of protein daily or about 30g with each meal, plus protein rich snacks.
- **Carbs are not one-size-fits-all:** A “high-carb” pregnancy diet is not the way. Most pregnant women benefit from moderate carb intake, with emphasis on quality (root vegetables, fruit, beans) instead of refined grains and sugars.
- **Healthy fats are essential:** Omega-3s (especially DHA from fish), fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E, K2), and cholesterol-rich foods support baby's brain, eyes, and nervous system development.
- **Micronutrient powerhouses:** Liver, eggs, leafy greens, and seafood provide choline, folate, iron, zinc, iodine, and other crucial nutrients often lacking in standard prenatal diets.
- **Blood sugar balance is key:** Stabilizing blood sugar helps prevent gestational diabetes, supports energy and mood, and improves outcomes for mother and baby.
- **Supplements are supportive, not substitutes:** A high-quality prenatal vitamin is helpful for many women, but real food creates the foundation.
- **Gut health and digestion matter:** Fermented foods, fiber from vegetables, and avoiding unnecessary antibiotics help support a healthy microbiome for both mother and baby.
- **Food safety myths need nuance:** Instead of avoiding nutrient-rich foods like fish, eggs, or soft cheeses, seek out organic or wild sources, small companies, and proper handling.
- **Postpartum nutrition is vital:** Healing, milk supply, and long-term maternal health depend on continued nutrient-dense eating after birth.