When you are breastfeeding, you need extra protein, calories, vitamins and minerals. The following guidelines will help provide good nutrition for you and your baby:

Eat a well balanced diet. It is recommended to consume a minimal intake of at least 2,000 calories per day. Drink enough fluids to quench your thirst. Drink a beverage such as water, milk, or juice every time your baby breastfeeds or when you pump. Drink 6-8 cups (8 ounces each) per day. Milk and juice from the food groups below count toward this total. Limit caffeine-containing beverages to 1 or 2 servings per day. Avoid or limit alcohol. Continue to eat spicy and gas-forming foods as desired, unless they seem to bother your baby. Visit [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov) to find more information for the breastfeeding mother.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Group</th>
<th>Servings per Day</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milk and Milk Products</td>
<td>3 or more</td>
<td>8 ounces milk, yogurt or cottage cheese 1-2 ounces cheese</td>
<td>Choose non-fat, low-fat, or whole, depending on your needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat, Poultry, Fish, and Beans</td>
<td>3 or more</td>
<td>2 ounces cooked beef, chicken, fish, pork, lamb 2 eggs 1 cup dry beans or peas 2 tbsp peanut butter</td>
<td>Try to eat with each meal and most snacks to supply your body with a constant supply-of protein.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>4 or more</td>
<td>1 cup raw vegetables 1/2 cup cooked vegetables 6 ounces vegetable juice</td>
<td>Include a wide variety. Raw vegetables, especially, add more fiber to your diet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits</td>
<td>3 or more</td>
<td>1 medium raw fruit 1/2 cup canned fruit 4 ounces juice</td>
<td>Include a wide variety. Raw fruits, especially, add more fiber to your diet. Fruits are preferred over juices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breads, Cereals, and Grains</td>
<td>9 or more</td>
<td>1 slice bread, 1/2 bun or English muffin 1 small roll, pancake, tortilla, or biscuit 1/2 cup cooked cereal or 1 ounce dry cereal 1/ 2 cup cooked pasta 3-4 crackers</td>
<td>Whole grains have more fiber than refined grains.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Poor appetite:

- You may lose your normal desire to eat after your baby is born. If this happens, try to eat nutritious high-calorie foods that don’t take a lot of preparation time. Try milk and fruit shakes, yogurt, cheese, eggs, peanut butter, nuts, seeds, and dried fruits.

Dieting while breastfeeding:

- Dieting, especially during the first months after delivery, is discouraged. A slow weight loss of 2-4 pounds per month after the first month is recommended. This means it will take you several months to return to your pre-pregnant weight. Losing weight too quickly may decrease your milk supply. Be patient with your weight loss.

Smoking and breastfeeding:

- Ideally, mothers who breastfeed should not smoke.
- Breast milk is the optimal nutrition for infants, and smoking cigarettes is not a reason to not breastfeed. The health risks of not breastfeeding are far greater than the risks of smoking and continuing to breastfeed. In a statement by the American Academy of Pediatrics in 2001, “Breastfeeding and smoking is less detrimental to the child than bottle feeding and smoking.”
- Nicotine use in a breastfeeding mother can cause a decreased breast milk supply and can lead to poor infant growth.
- Smoke as few cigarettes as possible each day.
- Smoke AFTER feedings. This allows for the level of nicotine in the milk to decrease before the next feeding.
- Smoke outside and away from your baby.
- Wear a smoking shirt or jacket when smoking. Remove it after smoking and leave it outside.
- If using a nicotine patch, do not smoke. This will increase your nicotine level.

For further information on secondhand smoke and quitting smoking, please see “Passive Smoking” Parenting Card.

For further questions on maternal diet while breastfeeding please call the Children’s Mercy Hospital Lactation Management Program Help Line at (816) 346-1309.