

Health And Diet

The nutritional requirements for the baby will rely solely on the breast milk, and therefore the mother will need to maintain a healthy diet. If the baby is large and grows fast, the fat stores gained by the mother during pregnancy can be depleted quickly, meaning that she may have trouble eating good enough to maintain and develop sufficient amounts of milk.

This type of diet normally involves a high calorie, high nutrition diet which follows on from that in pregnancy. Even though mothers in famine conditions can produce milk with nutritional content, a mother that is malnourished may produce milk with lacking levels of vitamins A, D, B6, and B12.

If they smoke, breast feeding mothers must use extreme caution. More than 20 cigarettes a day has been shown to reduce the milk supply and cause vomiting, diarrhoea, rapid heart rate, and restlessness in the infants. SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) is more common in babies that are exposed to smoke.

Heavy drinking is also known to harm the infant, as well as yourself. If you are breast feeding, you should avoid alcohol or consume very small amounts at a time.

The excessive consumption of alcohol by the mother can result in irritability, sleeplessness, and increased feeding in the infant. Moderate use, normally 1 - 2 cups a day normally produces no effect. Therefore, mothers that are breast feeding are advised to avoid caffeine or restrict intake of it.

By following a healthy diet and limiting your intake of the above, you'll ensure that your baby gets the right nutrients during your time of breast feeding. This stage of life is very important - as you don't want anything to happen to your baby.

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