



United States Department of Agriculture



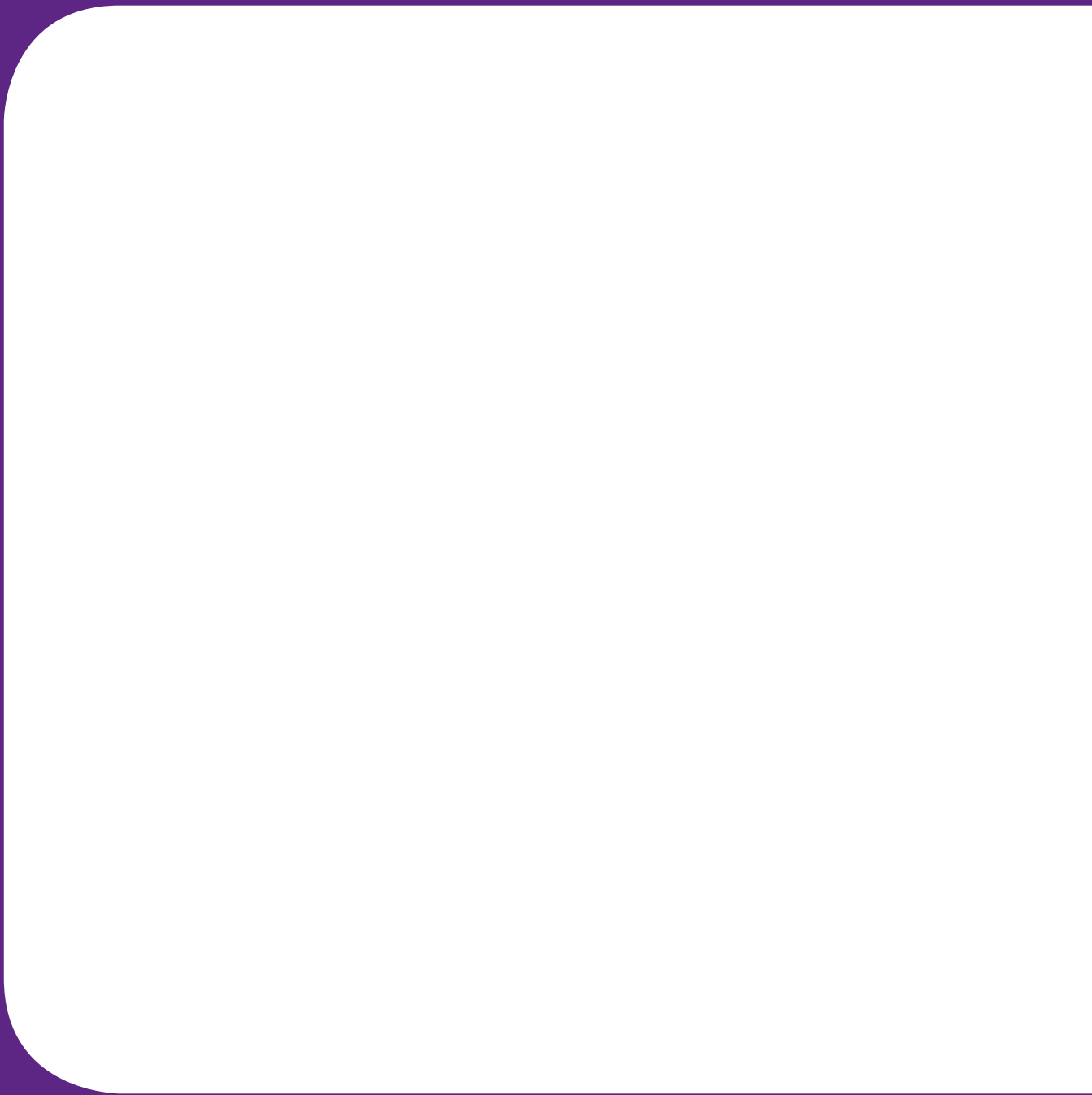
# Next Steps to Health

  
loving support.  
MAKES BREASTFEEDING WORK



for you  
and your  
family

FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE



# Next Steps to Health For You and Your Family





Congratulations to you and your baby on a healthy start to life. We hope that the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, commonly known as WIC, has helped you through pregnancy and the birth of your baby. By participating in WIC, you have learned about healthy eating; breastfeeding; immunizations; effects of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs; and other useful health information.

As you are leaving the WIC Program, this booklet provides you with information many moms need after their babies are born. It shares tips on how to keep you and your baby healthy and prepares you for a growing family. We hope it helps you and your family.

Best Wishes,

*Your WIC Program Staff*

**What area do you want to learn more about?**

**This booklet contains information on:**

● **Health Tips for Moms**

- 2 Let's Move and Make Healthful Food Choices!**
- 4 How Can I Manage My Weight?**
- 5 How Can I Fit Physical Activity Into My Busy Schedule?**

● **Tips for Keeping Your Baby Healthy**

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- 12 Other Important Health Tips**

● **How To Prepare for the Next Child**

- 14 I Want To Have Another Baby. What Should I Consider?**
- 15 Taking Care of You Helps You Take Care of Them**

**\* If you are interested in learning about other topics  
or if you have other questions, ask your local WIC staff.**

## health tips for moms

### Let's Move and Make Healthful Food Choices!

Are you interested in feeling the benefits of getting active, such as having more energy and preventing weight gain? Are you looking for ways to help you stay on track?

**Using SuperTracker or MyPlate can help you become a healthier mom!**

- **SuperTracker** is personalized to help you plan, analyze, and track your diet and physical activity: <https://www.supertracker.usda.gov/>
- **MyPlate** illustrates the five food groups that are the building blocks for a healthy diet: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>

#### **Balance Calories With Physical Activity To Manage Weight**

Enjoy your food, but eat less.

Avoid oversized portions.

Get moving. Get 2 ½ hours of physical activity each week, plus lift weights.

#### **Foods To Increase**

Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.

Make at least half your grains whole grains.

Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk.





## Here are a few tips on how to make healthy food choices:



Make half of your plate fruits and vegetables.



Choose a variety like citrus fruits and other whole fruits; beans and peas; and dark-green, red, and orange vegetables.



Consume half of all grains as whole grains like brown rice, 100% whole-wheat bread, and oatmeal. Choose whole grains in place of refined grains.



Choose fat-free or low-fat dairy products such as milk, yogurt, cheese, or fortified soy beverages.



Choose seafood, lean meat and poultry, eggs, beans and peas, soy products, and unsalted nuts and seeds.



Use oils to replace solid fats where possible.



Get easy and healthy recipes at:  
<http://www.whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/>

Get ideas for healthy eating  
on a budget at:  
[www.choosemyplate.gov/budget](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/budget)

## How Can I Manage My Weight?

### Watch What and How Much You Eat

Follow your **SuperTracker** plan and test your knowledge of food portions by checking out the MyPlate portion distortion quiz at: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/supertracker-tools/portion-distortion.html>

### Continue To Breastfeed Your Baby

Moms who breastfeed exclusively for more than 3 months lose more weight than moms who do not breastfeed.

### Move More

Once your doctor says it's ok, aim for 2 ½ hours of physical activity each week or more to lose weight. Lift weights 2 or more days per week.

### Step It Up! Mix It Up! Keep It Up!

Strive to increase your weekly activity time. Have you been walking for 30 minutes 5 days a week? Try jogging for part of the time instead of walking or try another activity such as biking or an exercise class. Keep at it! For more ideas, visit: [www.letsmove.gov](http://www.letsmove.gov)



**Making small changes in what and how much food you eat and physical activity you engage in can help you lose weight.**



## How Can I Fit Physical Activity Into My Busy Schedule?

Work out while the baby is napping. Try an exercise video or climb stairs.

Ask a family member or friend you trust for help to watch the baby while you go for a run or bike ride.

Get fit with baby laughs. Perform a goofy but energetic dance routine for your little one.

Make moving memories. Play games such as tag, follow the leader, and hide and seek with older children.

Fit several 10-minute mini-workouts into your day. Do jumping jacks, jog in place, skip, jump rope, do sit ups or pushups, or lift weights.



**Bring the baby. Put your baby in the stroller and walk at the mall or park.**

## My Ideas for Making Healthy Food Choices

### Whats in Your Cart?



Regular soda



French fries



Sugary cookies and candies



Chips and salty crackers



Reduced-fat (2%) milk



### Try This . . .

Seltzer water with either sliced fruit or a splash of 100% fruit juice

Baked sweet potato

Fresh fruit

Air-popped popcorn

Low-fat (1%) milk





### More Ideas

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●	→	●
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## My Goals for Physical Activity

### My Physical Activity Schedule

**STRIVE for 2 ½ hours or more per week plus 2 days of lifting weights**

	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	30 min		30 min	10 min each		30 min	30 min
WEEK	Walk around the block			Climbing stairs Jumping rope Jumping jacks			Swimming
1							
2							
3							
4							

### More Goals

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## tips for keeping your baby healthy

### How Should I Feed My Baby?

Doctors recommend feeding only breast milk for the first 6 months. Continue breastfeeding in addition to feeding solid foods until your baby is at least 1 year old, or older.



### Introduce Solid Foods

Talk to your doctor about when your baby may be ready to start solid foods.

Introduce one single-ingredient food at a time, and observe your baby for 3 to 5 days for possible allergic reactions such as rash, wheezing, vomiting, or diarrhea after feeding a new food.

Introduce single-grain infant cereals first; however, pureed forms of meat, vegetable, or fruit could be offered first.



## Introduce Solid Textures

Gradually introduce solid textures to your baby. Offer soft, moist foods as your baby gradually moves from gumming to chewing foods (**strained/pureed** → **mashed** → **ground/finely chopped** → **chopped**).

As your baby gets older, offer small pieces of finger foods (such as toast, crackers, and teething biscuits) to allow your baby to explore foods with the hands.

## Introduce Fluid in a Cup

Gradually introduce fluids in a cup to your baby between 6 and 12 months. Try to wean off the bottle entirely by about 12 months old.

Cow's milk, goat's milk, or soy beverage should not be added to your baby's diet before 1 year of age.



**Prevent young children from choking by being aware that some shapes, sizes, and textures of food can cause choking.**

**Cut up their food into small pieces no larger than one-half inch.**



## How Should I Take Care of My Baby's Gums and Teeth?

### For a Healthy Mouth

Avoid putting your baby to sleep with a bottle.

When your baby gets his or her first tooth (usually around 6 to 10 months), begin brushing the teeth with fluoride toothpaste twice a day. Use a small smear of toothpaste.

Brush the front and back of your baby's teeth. Lift the lips to brush at the gum line of the front teeth.

Babies don't need juice, but if you introduce juice, wait until your baby is 6 months old. Serve only 100% fruit juice in a cup.

Take your baby to the dentist by 1 year of age to have teeth and gums checked.



**Clean your baby's gums after every feeding even before the first teeth come in.**  
**Use a clean, damp washcloth or a toothbrush with soft bristles made for babies.**



### Keep Your Own Mouth Healthy

When your mouth is healthy, your baby is more likely to have a healthy mouth, too. Brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, floss before bedtime, eat healthy foods, and get regular dental care.

## Why Does My Baby Need Vaccines?

### **Vaccines help keep your baby healthy.**

They protect your baby against serious diseases such as measles, mumps, rotavirus, rubella, polio, tetanus, chickenpox, whooping cough and more. These diseases can make your baby very sick and can even result in brain damage or death.

### **Are vaccines safe? Yes**

The benefits of protecting your child against a serious disease outweigh the possible side effects from vaccines. Most side effects from vaccines are minor, treatable, and do not last long. Serious reactions are very rare. If you have concerns or questions, talk to your child's doctor.

### **Make a vaccination schedule for your family.**

Your baby will need several vaccines as he or she grows into childhood. Adults need vaccines too.

The recommended vaccination schedule is designed to protect you and your growing family before being exposed to potentially life-threatening diseases.

Check with your doctor to see if you are up to date with your vaccines. Be sure to track your vaccines with a vaccination record and note when next doses are due. Make sure both you and your child are vaccinated on schedule.



**For a complete list of recommended vaccines for children and adults, go to <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/index.html>**



## Other Important Health Tips

Keep yourself and your baby away from secondhand smoke.

Don't use drugs — they can harm you and your baby and affect everyone in the family.

Always place your baby on his or her back for every sleep time.

Place your baby in a high chair (using a safety belt) to sit with the family during mealtime.

Select a car seat based on your child's age, height, and weight. Keep your child in the car seat for as long as possible if your child fits the seat's height and weight safety requirements.



As your baby gets older, place your baby on a solid surface in order to strengthen his or her neck muscles. This should only be done when you can closely watch your baby and when your baby is awake and alert.

Infants and children under age 2 do not need to watch TV. Instead, spend time talking and playing with your baby to promote brain growth.

Keep your child active for at least 60 minutes a day.

## My Goals and Ideas for Keeping my Baby Healthy

Breastfeeding in addition to solid foods until my baby is at least \_\_\_\_\_



Check with doctor to see if up to date with vaccines

Keep a healthy mouth by \_\_\_\_\_



Keep away from secondhand smoke by \_\_\_\_\_

### More Ideas

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## how to prepare for the next child

### I Want To Have Another Baby. What Should I Consider?

**Plan for growing your family.** Talk with your doctor about your plans to get pregnant.

Check your weight. Lose weight if you are overweight.

Avoid alcohol, tobacco, and drug use.

Folic acid helps a baby's brain and spine grow. Consume 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid every day from fortified foods and/or vitamins in addition to eating a healthy diet.

Folate-rich foods include: Beans and peas, oranges and orange juice, and dark-green leafy vegetables; and fortified grain products like ready-to-eat breakfast cereals.

Talk about your intent to breastfeed. Ask questions and let everyone know your needs for support. For information about breastfeeding, visit: <http://lovingsupport.nal.usda.gov/>



**Taking steps to improve your health before pregnancy can give your baby a great start.**



## Taking care of you helps you take care of them.



Relax. It's important to unwind in a way that works for you. Try a bubble bath, deep breathing, yoga, meditation, or massage therapy. Or take a few minutes to sit, listen to soothing music, or read a book.

Making healthy food choices and being physically active helps you have the energy to care for your family.

Have you been worried about the way you have been feeling? Symptoms such as deep feelings of sadness, difficulty sleeping, irritability, changes in appetite, and trouble concentrating may be a sign of depression.

It is important to tell a doctor or nurse about your concerns. **The National Helpline is also available 24 hours a day at 1-800-662-HELP (4357)** to provide referrals to local support networks and resources.

In addition, [www.MentalHealth.gov](http://www.MentalHealth.gov) provides one-stop access to U.S. Government mental health information and resources.

## My Goals and Ideas for Preparing for the Next Child

**Talk with my doctor about plans to get pregnant**



**Eat a healthy diet**

**Avoid alcohol, tobacco and drug use**



**Check my weight.  
Lose weight if overweight**

### More Ideas

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## People, Places, and Phone Numbers To Contact for Help or More Information

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### Other Resources

Federal programs may also be able to help you. For information related to programs and services offered by USDA's Food and Nutrition Service, please call the **National Hunger Hotline**: 1-866-348-6479 (1-866-3-HUNGRY). You can also visit <http://www.fns.usda.gov/programs-and-services>

**Benefits.gov** helps you find other assistance programs. Visit <http://www.benefits.gov/>

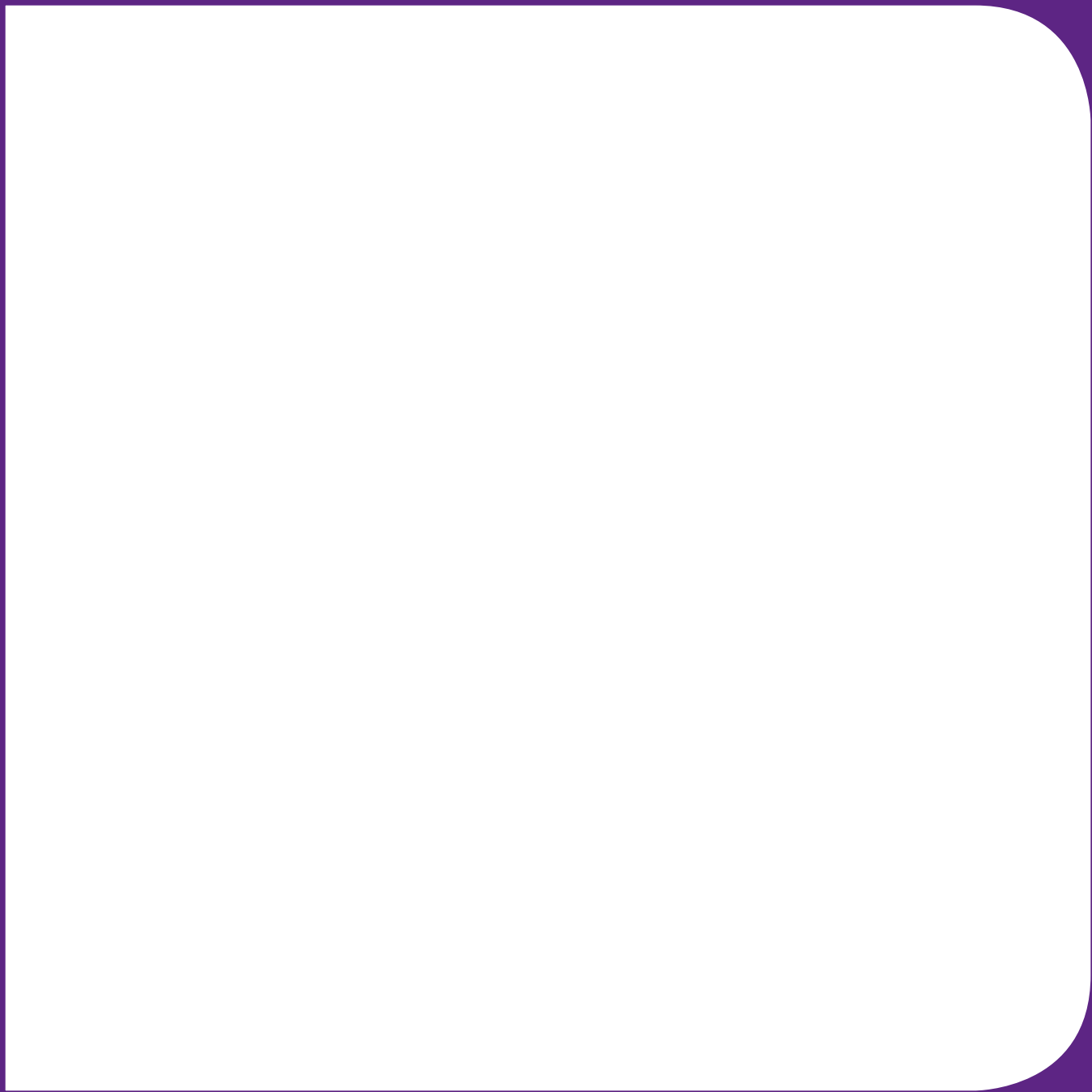
## *Final Note to Moms*


We hope WIC has given you some new ideas about keeping yourself and your family healthy.

Enjoy your time with your baby and being a mom.  
Remember to **Stick with WIC** as your family grows.









Buying, selling, or otherwise misusing benefits from USDA's nutrition assistance programs is a crime. To report suspected abuse, call (800) 424-9121, email: [usda\\_hotline@oig.usda.gov](mailto:usda_hotline@oig.usda.gov), or write the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Inspector General, PO Box 23399, Washington, DC, 20026-3399.