

References



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What are healthy defaults?

- Healthy defaults are choices that take little effort and result in healthy behavior. This pamphlet will show you how to make the healthy choice the easy choice.¹

Why are they important?

- As a future mom, food and activity choices make now are not only for you, but for your baby. As a teen mom, you're also still growing and need to keep your body growing along with your little one's.^{2(p253)}

How can I make healthy defaults in my own life?

- Start with the tips inside this handout! Each pregnancy and person is different and comes with their own set of challenges. Experiment and find what works best for you. Don't forget – you're not doing this alone! Make sure to reach out for support from some of the suggestions inside.

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NUTRITION FOR THE PREGNANT TEEN

*A guide to creating
healthy defaults*



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What Food Do I Choose?

Food Groups

- Use ChooseMyPlate.gov for a list of foods from each food group that are good during pregnancy.³ The food you choose needs a lot of nutrients to prepare for birth and breastfeeding.^{2(p236)} Veggies (carrots, spinach, tomatoes) and fruits (bananas, oranges) have vitamins and minerals like vitamin A and potassium. Fat-free dairy (milk, yogurt) has vitamin D and calcium. Grains (cereal) have iron and folic acid. Proteins (beans, nuts, lean beef, fish) provide iron and fiber, and seafood has omega-3 fatty acids.

Easy Snacks

- Keep healthy snacks at home and pack some for school. Grocery stores have pre-cut fruits and veggies to make them easy to eat. You can also have crackers, granola bars, and fortified cereals for quick eating as well.^{3,4}

Who Can Help me?

Family

- Ask your family to set a regular meal times.⁵ Even better, ask to help with making meals and picking groceries. This lets you ask for help with picking healthy foods and teaches you food prep and decision-making skills you can pass on to your child once he or she is old enough.^{6(p371)}

Friends

- Friends are an important source of support. They can help with basic needs like food and transportation, but they are also a source of emotional support.⁷

Food Assistance

- Find local food assistance programs. WIC is a program that focuses on improving the health and nutrition of pregnant women from low-income families.^{2(p136)} They and other food assistance programs can help give advice that friends or family may not have. They provide counseling, education, and weight guidance. Some can also have support and discussion groups that can connect you to other pregnant teens.^{6(p157)}



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What else can I do?

Small or Portable Checklists

- To keep track of what you can and can't eat, what groceries you need, keeping track of your growth, or anything else, tear-off notepads or dry erase boards are your friends! You can carry a small spiral notebook from home to school in your backpack. Small dry erase boards with magnets can also be hung up at home or in your locker.³

Use Technology

- Apps on your cell phone or online websites can give you daily reminders and evidence-based advice.⁸ They can help you keep easy track of your diet and make changes just for you.