

# Take the road to better health

Hey mom! Use what you learn at WIC to live a healthier life for you and your family.

## Get Enough Folic Acid

For expecting and new moms folic acid is an important vitamin. When you are pregnant, getting enough folic acid can help prevent birth defects of baby's brain and spine. Women who are pregnant need 600 mcg of folic acid a day. To get enough, take a prenatal vitamin.

Even if you are not pregnant, it is important to get enough folic acid, in case you become pregnant. Taking a multivitamin and/or eating fortified cereal with at least 400 mcg of folic acid each day can be an easy way to get enough.



## Consider Breastfeeding Your Baby

Breastfeeding can be one of the best things you do for both you and your baby's health. Experts recommend breastfeeding for baby's first year of life and beyond.

**Moms benefit** by burning extra calories, making it easier to lose weight. It also helps the uterus to go back to its original size and lessens any bleeding a woman may have, after giving birth.

**Babies benefit** by getting the perfect nutrition that changes as they grow. Breastfed babies are more able to fight off infection and disease like diarrhea, ear infections, and respiratory illness, such as pneumonia.

## Make Healthy Food Choices

Having a well-balanced diet can help you and your child to get the nutrition that you need. **Families benefit** from following a healthy eating pattern by getting the right nutrients for their bodies, reducing their risk of chronic diseases, and staying at healthy weights. Some tips you may have heard at WIC are:



- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables. Focus on whole fruits. Vary your veggies.
- Make half your grains whole grains.
- Move to low-fat and fat-free milk or yogurt.
- Vary your protein routine.
- Drink and eat less sodium, saturated fat, and added sugars.

## Stay Up To Date with Immunizations

It is important for **EVERYONE** in your family to get immunizations, when it is recommended. Doing this can save your child's life, as well as, protect others around you. In the past, diseases such as measles, mumps, polio, and whooping cough affected many families. Today we are able to protect from these diseases and more by getting immunizations.



## Avoid Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drugs

Substance use for anyone can lead to health problems. When you are pregnant, there is no safe time, amount, or type of alcohol, tobacco, or drug use. Smoking while pregnant can increase mom and baby's risk of illness or death. Drinking while pregnant can cause lifelong consequences for children and their families.