

THE HAPPY BABY BOOK



An Anthology of Parenting Wisdom

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Acknowledgments

The Happy Baby Book project is a way of saying thank you to our customers for making Rainbow Light such an important part of caring for their families throughout every life stage. Raising helpful, happy and healthy children is a monumental effort and we hope the Happy Baby Book will grow into an enduring resource for us all.



An Anthology of Parenting Wisdom

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Introduction

Nutrition truly sets the foundation for a healthy pregnancy outcome for both mother and baby. From the joyful, and occasionally stressful, time a woman is trying to conceive, through the sometimes blissful and seemingly endless months of pregnancy, and finally onto nursing a precious new life, a women's nutritional needs go through many different phases.

The Happy Baby Book is intended to provide a wide array of expert opinions to help all new mom's nurture their greatest creations.

Each selected professional will give insights into their particular area of expertise and much more detail will be offered for each phase, but as an overview lets take a brief, topline look at the stages of pregnancy and how nutrition can impact what is happening during these miraculous stages of developing a new life.



Preconception

It's really quite a simple fact that when preparing for pregnancy, a healthy body helps make a healthy baby. Fertility can be impacted by many factors and those which hopeful new parents-to-be can control include diet, exercise, stress, supplementation and other lifestyle factors.

- Eat a nutrient dense diet which includes a wide variety of colorful fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean protein and healthy fats. Engage in regular physical activity and/or relaxation activities to minimize stress. Nutrition and stress can impact hormonal balance which supports fertility and the ability to conceive.
- Caffeine may impede fertility, the March of Dimes suggests limiting coffee and tea consumption to one large cup per day. Artificial sweeteners, alcohol, recreational (and some prescription) drugs, and cigarettes all have the potential of reducing fertility.
- You may have an easier time conceiving if you're at a healthy weight. Being under or overweight may make it harder for some women to become pregnant, and may increase risk for problems during pregnancy.



Critical Nutrients

Did you know that according to the March of Dimes, 70% of birth defects of the neural tube (brain & spine) could be prevented with folic acid supplementation?

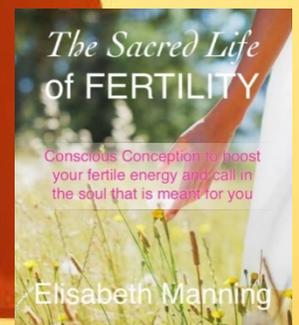
- Folic acid is intricately involved in the development of the neural tube, a process which happens within the first 28 days of pregnancy when many women don't yet know that they are pregnant. This is why all women of childbearing age are recommended to supplement with a minimum of 400 mcg of folic acid.
- Folic acid also is important for sperm quality. Shortfalls of this vital nutrient can potentially contribute to chromosomal abnormalities.
- Folic acid helps produce additional maternal blood cells, aiding growth of the placenta and fetus and producing new DNA as cells multiply.
- Research also suggests that folic acid may help prevent cleft lip and cleft palate, and some heart defects.
- Folic Acid food sources include beans, peas, orange juice, green leafy vegetables, fortified cereals.
- Zinc is critical for both female and male fertility. For women it is involved in the ovulation process; for men it supports healthy testosterone levels and sperm production. Zinc food sources include oysters, red meat, poultry, whole grains, and nuts.

Happy Mothers Make Happy Babies

It all begins with the mother, not the child. Happy mothers make happy babies, and happy babies also make happy mothers. It's cyclical and pass-on-able, when those children have children of their own. They offer a truly positive contribution to humanity that can literally change the world.

A simple example: A mother will always want to calm her child, but if she herself is radiating stress, fear, anxiety or explosive emotions, her actions become very confusing to the child. If your intention is to calm a child, you must be calm yourself. A child almost instantly is calmed if the caregiver approaches the child calmly and from love.

A safe, calm, nurturing environment is critical for happiness. Safety and nurturing are the two most important things. But here is the crux: a parent must give this to him/herself first in order to model it and pass it on to their child.



Elisabeth Manning is the
Founder of [FERTILE
LIVING](#) and Author of *The
Sacred Life of Fertility*



“A baby will make love stronger, days shorter, nights longer, bank balances smaller, homes happier, clothes dirtier, the past forgotten, and the future worth living for.”

Anonymous

A photograph of a pregnant woman's belly, with a cutaway illustration showing a fetus in the uterus. The fetus is curled up, and the placenta is visible. The woman's hand is resting on her hip.

The First Trimester

In this early stage of pregnancy, baby grows from about the size of the tip of a pen to about the size of a large apricot (about 2.5 inches by the third month.)

Maternal hormones are surging which can cause nausea and food aversions for mom, yet fetal development is in full swing so assuring adequate nutritional intake is vital for both mom's health and baby's growth.

The third week after conception, marks the beginning of the embryonic period, where the embryo has three layers of cells which are rapidly dividing and preparing for demands of fetal growth later in pregnancy:

- Ectoderm (top layer) will become baby's skin, central & peripheral nervous systems, eyes, inner ear and many connective tissues.
- Mesoderm (middle layer) will become baby's heart, circulatory system bones, muscles, kidneys and much of reproductive system.

Endoderm (inner layer) will become baby's lungs, intestines and bladder.

Critical Nutrients

There should be a negligible increase in calorie requirements, focus on eating a wide variety of whole, minimally processed foods to provide mom's energy needs.

All nutrients are important, but the following specifically address cell division, growth and development and are critical for baby's early development:

- Protein: The main "building block" for the body's cells. Protein helps produce extra maternal blood and energy stores.
- Folic acid: Essential for brain and nervous system development and the prevention of birth defects.
- Vitamin B12: Needed to make red blood cells, also promotes the normal growth and maintenance of the nervous system.
- Zinc: Plays an important role in the formation of organs, skeleton, nerves, and circulatory organs.



The Metamorphosis of Motherhood

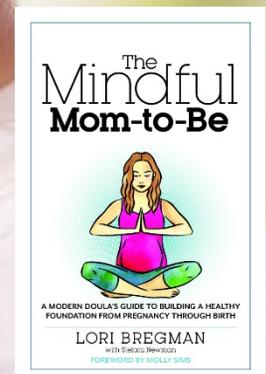
I think of pregnant women much like a caterpillar that's in a cocoon transforming into a butterfly. During pregnancy she is shedding and releasing the old and building her new mama wings. A death of the old must happen so a new life can emerge.

There is so much focus on the birth and arrival of the baby and not enough acknowledgment and attention to this incredible metamorphose that happens when a women gives birth to this new part of herself.

As Maya Angelou says, "We delight in the beauty of the butterfly, but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty."



Lori Bregman is the author of [The Mindful Mom To Be](#) and is a [Life Coach and Healer](#).



Preparing for Pregnancy: What Can a Man Do?

The first thing a man has to do to prepare for pregnancy is to remember that during pregnancy and even after, it's all about the woman. They have to let go of any need to have control.

The man has to embrace the knowledge that a woman is focused on her body, mind, spirit, and reevaluating many aspects of her life. Her health will be more important than any period in her life.

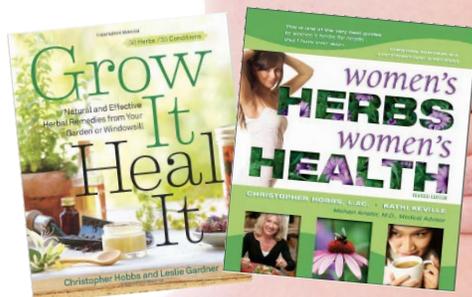
Depending on the situation and the woman, a man might need to put his sexual desires on hold during periods of the pregnancy and often after the pregnancy.

Because the man wants to naturally be doing something, his jobs can be cooking, cleaning, and providing other practical things that might be needed, especially at the end of the pregnancy when the woman is very heavy.

He can gather information about nutrition, the best practitioners, and help during the birthing process, along with a midwife, nurse, or doctor.

The man has to be positive and supportive, not let fears or doubts get in the way of being fully present for one of life's greatest mysteries, and also greatest joys.

[Christopher Hobbs](#) has taught at Stanford Medical School, Yale Medical School, Bastyr University and the U.C. Berkeley and has written over 25 books.



“Making the decision to have a child is momentous. It is to decide forever to have your heart go walking around outside your body.”

Elizabeth Stone



The Second Trimester

By beginning of month 4, nausea usually subsides and mom's appetite returns, she needs about 300 extra calories per day which is really not that much and is certainly not a license to eat for two!

Examples of ~300 calorie meals

- 8 ounces low-fat yogurt (sweetened), medium apple
- Whole wheat pita, ¼ cup hummus, 12 baby carrots
- 1 cup raisin bran, 6 ounces skim milk, 4 ounces orange juice
- 2 slices whole wheat bread, 1 tbsp. peanut butter, ½ banana
- 4 ounces salmon, medium sweet potato, ½ cup steamed broccoli

In the second trimester, baby nearly doubles in size, growing to over 5 inches in length! The baby's gender becomes apparent and the baby begins to move, kick and swallow.



Critical Nutrients

Baby is rapidly growing, but of particular importance during this phase are the following nutrients which support blood, brain, nerves and eyes:

- **Iron:** required for the manufacture of hemoglobin (transports oxygen) in maternal and fetal red blood cells, the fetus draws from mom's stores placing her at risk for iron deficiency anemia. Sources of Iron include leafy greens, meat, poultry, seafood, dried fruit and legumes.
- **B vitamins:** needed for red blood cells, energy metabolism, growth. Sources of B vitamins are widely dispersed in the food supply. B12 is found mostly in animal foods so it's common for vegetarians to supplement.
- **Choline:** needed for fetal brain development. Sources of choline include eggs, meat and peanuts.
- **Omega-3 (DHA):** essential for optimum development of the tissues of the brain, eyes, and central nervous system. Sources of DHA are fish, specialty eggs and marine algae. Freshly ground flax seeds provide a precursor to DHA, alpha-linolenic acid.
- **Iodine:** needed for the body to make thyroid hormones, involved with babies brain and nervous system development. Sources of iodine include sea vegetables, dairy, cranberries, navy beans and fortified foods.



Making Happy Babies



1. Be Present

In today's fast-paced world, we are so distracted and "busy." But try to be present for your child as much as you can. That means even if she is quiet and happy playing, you take the time to interact with her. Children's brains grow through play and interaction; so the more time you spend with your child, the better for your child's development.

2. Take Care of Yourself

No, you are no superwoman and nobody expects you to be perfect. Do your best to get lots of sleep and do things that make you feel good. A happy mother makes a happy child.

3. Limit Electronics

When a child plays with an electronic toy (one that lights up or make sounds when pressed) it gets the child used to being entertained. When a child plays with a toy that is not electronic (balls, blocks) the child learns to be curious and engaged in learning rather than passively entertained. Playing with simple toys help your child develop cognitive skills in a way that electronic ones don't.

4. Understand Their Point of View

It is easy to wonder why your baby is crying yet again. You just changed his diaper and fed him so why is he fussy? It can be hard but try to see it from your babies point of view. Maybe she is overstimulated? Maybe she wants to cuddle? Maybe she got scared from a noise? Everything is new to your baby and she can get scared and bothered easily. The more they see they can trust you to help them when they are in need the safer and happier they will feel.

Chaya S Gutnick
[consultant](#)

The Third Trimester

90% of fetal growth occurs during the last half of pregnancy, growing a small human is hard work and many women experience fatigue, backaches and heartburn. Some are ravenous, others may feel too "full" to eat. Mom needs an additional 500kcal per day.

In the third trimester, baby's eyes open, hands are active, breathing begins, toenails and fingernails grow, immune system develops, bone growth accelerates.



Critical Nutrients

Baby is rapidly growing, but of particular importance during this phase are the following nutrients which support blood, brain, nerves and eyes:

- **Calcium:** Baby acquires most of its calcium in the last trimester when skeletal growth is rapid. If intake is low, baby will draw as much as 250-300 mg of calcium from mom each day. Calcium rich foods include dairy, broccoli and kale.
- **Vitamin D:** Aids in absorption of calcium. During most months, our body can manufacture Vitamin D from minimal exposure to the sun, however for those living in the Northern Hemisphere, little (if any) Vitamin D is synthesized during the winter months.

Additionally, sunblock may inhibit the skin's ability to absorb UVB radiation and produce Vitamin D. Those of us with darker skin require greater sun exposure to produce adequate Vitamin D levels. Vitamin D sources include fatty fish, fortified foods, egg yolks from sun pastured hens, mushrooms exposed to UV light, and supplements.

- **Iron:** By the 8th month of pregnancy blood volume has increased significantly, and iron replenishment is critical. Iron can be found in meat, poultry, seafood, dried fruit, legumes and leafy greens.



“When my baby is sleeping, that’s when I think, *Wow I made that.*”

Anonymous



Birth & Babyhood

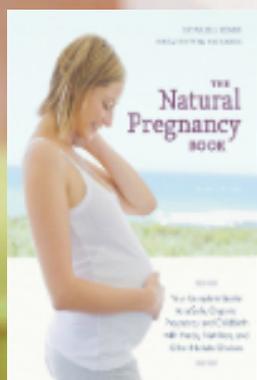
Energy and nutrient needs continue to be elevated postpartum. The energy required for daily milk production is over 500 calories. Additional fluid intake is also important while nursing.

- Nutrients of particular significance for wound healing and for maintaining immune health include protein, zinc and vitamin C.
- Lack of sleep and the inherent demands of newborns are a challenge to any new mother!
- Maintaining a good nutrition foundation while breastfeeding is key for the physical and mental health and happiness of all new moms, and for providing the best sustenance possible for their new additions!



Drug Free Babies

This current generation of children – your children and mine – has been called “Generation RX” because of the rising number of health problems they are facing, and the unprecedented number of medications they are prescribed – from the treatment of eczema when they are babies and young children, to the potentially dangerous overuse of tylenol and antibiotics for every fever, ear infection and sore throat, to the number of medications prescribed for ADHD, depression, and anxiety.

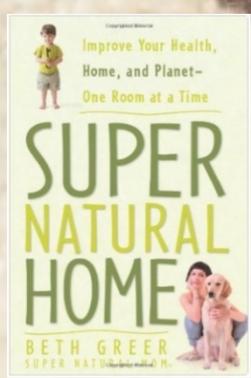


Aviva Romm is the author of The [Natural Pregnancy Book](#) and many other [books for moms](#).

10 Ways to Make the Baby Nursery Safe & Healthy:

Parents often make serious mistakes when setting up the nursery. The wrong furniture, carpeting, and paint can create a toxic environment from airborne chemicals released from these products. The good news: creating a healthy nursery is easy!

1. Choose a crib mattress and pad made from natural latex foam rubber, wool and cotton.
2. Buy a solid wood crib instead of particleboard (contains formaldehyde, a carcinogen).
3. Use no VOC wall paint, or paper-based wallpaper instead of vinyl.
4. Install wool carpet -- naturally flame retardant & hypoallergenic.
5. Stay away from synthetic fragrances in dryer sheets, air fresheners & body care products. (Contains phthalates — chemicals that interfere with hormones).
6. Pick cleaning supplies like vinegar, hydrogen peroxide and baking soda.
7. Stay away from plastic bottles and food storage containers — they contain chemicals that leach into food and water. Choose glass or metal.
8. Choose wooden toys with nontoxic paints and finishes.
9. Don't put electric clocks, cell phones or electric blankets in the crib— these have electromagnetic fields (EMFs) that can impact health.
10. Make your home shoeless...don't track in pesticides and other chemicals from the outside.



Beth Greer is the author of [Super Natural Home](#) and hosts the website [Super Natural Mom](#).

“I believe in love
at first sight...
because I'm a
mom.”

Anonymous



LIFE CHANGER



Rainbow Light, the #1 natural prenatal brand,* brings you prenatal vitamins formulated to support your pregnancy, life stage and lifestyle. With essential vitamins, minerals and superfoods, our full line of prenatal formulas offers complete nutrition for mother and baby from conception through nursing.*

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