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Will eating well as of now help me feel better during my pregnancy?

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Monday, May 29th, 2017

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What Should You Eat?

Whether for the first time or to expand your family, when you want to launch into the adventure of motherhood, what you eat plays an active role so that everything goes even more smoothly.

Why the need for a Balanced Diet?

A balanced diet prepares your body for the exceptional experience of pregnancy. What you eat while you are pregnant is important both for your health and for your baby to develop properly.

What does it provide?

Eating well on a daily basis provides your body with all of the nutrients and micro-nutrients that your baby needs to grow, without any deficiencies or excess. The nine months to come will thus be an experience filled with pleasure for you !

What are the benefits?

Adopting good eating habits even before you become pregnant offers numerous advantages and will be of value to you during and after your pregnancy.

Will eating well as of now help me feel better during my pregnancy?

Yes. Quite simply, because by providing your body with what it needs as of now, you allow it to build up reserves of essential elements, such as iron and folic acid. In addition, a balanced diet gives your body renewed energy, enabling you to avoid the fatigue that is sometimes associated with pregnancy.

Can nutrition help me combat the risk of anemia?

Yes, by increasing your iron intake you can combat the risks of becoming anemic. If you are lacking in iron, you run the risk of being more tired. You can limit the effects of being iron deficient by giving preference to certain foods, notably red meat. If your diet does not provide you with enough iron, your doctor will be able to prescribe a supplement.

Can it help me recover more quickly after pregnancy?

Yes. Your body needs maximum energy and nutritional resources to recover after your baby's birth. Good nutrition is essential in this recuperation process.

Why is it important to eat well beforehand?

During the first weeks following conception, baby is developing rapidly and its vital organs are forming at full speed. Before you realize that you are pregnant, several important steps in its development have already been crossed. It is therefore better to be prepared nutritionally, so as to provide all the elements that are needed.

The importance of Iron?

The iron needs of pregnant women are higher than at any other time of life. A pregnant woman's iron needs increase during pregnancy; which reach up to 30 mg per day during the third trimester. Baby creates its own iron reserves by drawing on yours. Therefore, build up good reserves before becoming pregnant.

What does Iron do?

Iron plays an essential role in the body. It forms part of the red blood cells and facilitates the transport of oxygen by hemoglobin in the blood.

Where is it found?

Two forms of iron exist:

- (i) Heme iron: red meat is its main source. In this form, heme iron is well absorbed by the body.
- (ii) Non-Heme iron: It is found in numerous foods, mainly pulses, dried fruit and in smaller quantities in whole grain, cereals and green vegetables. In this form, it is much less well absorbed by the body. This absorption can, however, be stimulated by the consumption of food rich in vitamin C (for example: an orange for dessert) during the same meal.

The Importance of Calcium?

An essential component of the skeleton is calcium, which plays a lifelong key role. Bone is a living organ that is constantly being renewed. A regular intake of calcium guarantees that you remain in good health.

What does Calcium do?

Calcium encourages the renewal of bone cells along with solid bones and teeth. Later, when you are pregnant, it is involved in the process of forming your child's bones too. Calcium also takes part in blood coagulation, helps to control cardiac rhythm and plays a fundamental role in muscle contraction and relaxation. Last but not least, it enables certain enzymes to function and certain

hormones to be secreted.

Sources of Calcium

The main source of calcium is obviously milk and dairy products.

It is also contained in fruits and vegetables but to obtain as much calcium as with milk, they must be eaten in large quantities.

The Importance of Folic Acid (Vitamin B6)

Folic acid plays a key role in intense metabolic activities. An adequate intake is therefore very important both for the mother and the child's development, especially in its initial phases.

- a) It is therefore necessary to increase folic acid intake right from baby's conception
- b) On stopping oral contraception, with a view to pregnancy.
- c) During pregnancy, to keep pace with the growth of the uterus and the formation of the placenta.
- d) A folic acid deficiency induces the risk of premature birth and slow fetal growth, and maybe in extreme cases, a diet greatly lacking in vitamin B9 may lead to anomalies of the neural tube or spinal cord.

Where is it found?

The recommended daily amounts are 400 micrograms. Make your choice from among foodstuffs with the highest content e.g.

- a) Over 100 micrograms of folic acid per 100 grams of spinach, green salad, walnuts, almonds, peanuts, melon.
- b) Between 50 and 100 micrograms per 100 grams of cabbage, broccoli, red kidney beans, beetroot, eggs and strawberries.

What should you drink?

Drinking 1.5 to 2 litres of liquids per day ensures that your kidneys are working properly and allows you to effectively combat constipation, which is a minor inconvenience common to most moms-to-be.

What should you drink as a priority?

Water is the only indispensable drink. Drinking 1 to 1.5 liters of water per day makes exchanges between the mother's body and that of the fetus easier.

Milk is a drink that is particularly recommended for moms-to-be because of its high calcium and protein content. It is a foodstuff in its own right and should be added to your everyday food intake. Skimmed milk contains just as much calcium and protein but fewer fats and calories.

Once that you have given birth and if you are breastfeeding your child, it is recommended to continue to drink approximately 500ml of milk per day.

Can you drink everything?

It is preferable to limit your tea and coffee consumption during your pregnancy. It would be a good idea to reduce your daily coffee intake to one or two cups a day. Pregnancy increases your sensitivity to caffeine and its effects on sleep and cardiac rhythm. Above five cups a day, coffee can have the same consequences as smoking (risk of miscarriage or low birth weight). Just like coffee, tea is a stimulant. Moreover, it limits the absorption of iron too.

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