

Mothers' Traditional Foods To Help Build Milk Supply



Essential Meal Planning Tips

- ✿ Every bite counts.
- ✿ Plan a healthy meal or snack each 2-3 hours.
- ✿ Initially after birth, limit food that is hard for you to digest, for instance fried, fatty, processed, or spicy food.
- ✿ Eat at least two cups of cooked greens or one cup of raw greens daily. More is better, and cooked is preferable to raw in the early days.
- ✿ Use vegetable milks such as almond, rice, coconut or hemp.
- ✿ Enjoy drinks like Atole (oats or cornmeal simmered with milk or water), barley water, roasted barley coffee substitute (Pero, Kaffee Roma, DandyBlend)
- ✿ Flavor your food with lactogenic spices and condiments.
- ✿ Spice your beverages for instance with cinnamon, ginger, turmeric, anise, fennel, or cumin.
- ✿ Have a green drink daily – blended/juiced or instant powder (barley grass, chlorella, spirulina).
- ✿ Soups made of the grains and vegetables listed here. Include bone broth and a green such as seaweed, kale, dandelion leaves, malunggay or torbangun leaves.
- ✿ As your supply grows, so does your hunger. Your body likes to know you are in a “time of plenty” and you signal this by eating often and well.

Lactogenic Foods Helpful for Making More Milk

Vegetables

Fennel root, beetroot, carrots, yam, sweet potato, dark leafy greens like romaine lettuce and mustard greens, green onion

(Be sure to get plenty of greens including “green drinks” – best 2-3x every day)

Fruit

Dates, Figs, Apricots, Papaya, (use green papaya in soup) Goji Berries

Good Fats

Butter, Olive Oil, Coconut Oil
Flaxseed Oil, Sesame Oil (Be sure to get plenty of fats) – supplement with fish oil and evening primrose oil.

Grains

Barley, Oats/Oatmeal, Quinoa, Rice, Millet, Buckwheat

Nuts and Seeds

Almonds, Sesame Seed, Sunflower Seed, Chia Seed, Hemp Seed, Flaxseed, Coconut

Legumes

Chickpeas, Lentils, Peas, Green beans, Adzuki, Kidney, Black or White Beans

Animal Products

Choose Organic, antibiotic-free, full fat meat and dairy, wild caught small fish

Herbs / Spices:

Marjoram, Basil, Pepper, Fennel, Anise, Dill, Caraway, Cumin, Dandelion

Condiments:

Garlic, Ginger, Onion

Avoid Large Amounts:

Parsley, Sage, Rosemary, Thyme, Peppermint

(Also avoid these in candy, toothpaste, medicine, etc.)

Let your love and joy flow to your baby, regardless how you feed.

Reference:

Jacobson, Hilary

Mother Food: A breastfeeding diet guide for lactogenic foods and herbs.

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For more information, refer to **Mother Food** and other books, webinars and videos by Hilary Jacobson

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Recipes Used Around the World by Breastfeeding Mothers

Barley Water

Barley Water is used around the world to support milk supply, and many mothers find it to be as effective as the medicine Domperidone. Simply make a pot of barley water in the morning and drink or sip it throughout the day. Barley water is affordable and easy-to-make. Use whole grain, or pearl barley, or barley flakes.

Quick Preparation: Simmer 1/2 cup of flakes or pearled barley in 1 quart of water for twenty minutes. Open a couple capsules or add a teaspoon of one of the herbs or spices on the list, (fenugreek, fennel, anise...). Optional: a few slices of ginger.

Sieve off the liquid. If you would like, sweeten with stevia or natural sweetener such as stevia or honey.

Long Preparation: 1/2 cup of barley is simmered in 3 quarts of water for up to 2 hours. About half the liquid should cook off. As the barley simmers, the water will become thicker and turn pink. If barley water becomes too thick to drink comfortably, add in more water. Add in herbs and ginger, to suit your taste. Sieve off the liquid and sweeten. Drink one pot throughout the day, every day for a week, for best results.

For your information: Barley contains gluten.

Oats and Oatmeal

Horchata is a Mexican beverage used by breastfeeding mothers. Oat flakes can be used instead of rice, and you can add in coconut milk or almond milk.

Oats (and also barley) are fine in **soup**. Chicken soup supports milk supply. To make it even "stronger," prepare it with the bones and cook with oat flakes, barley or adzuki beans. Careful: sage, parsley and cilantro suppress supply.

Breakfast oatmeal, (quick-cook flakes or slow-cooking steel cut oats). Add in lactogenic ingredients such as cinnamon, dried coconut, almond slivers, raisins, sunflower seeds, and chopped dates, apricots or dried figs. Soften with butter, almond milk or coconut milk.

You can add oat flakes to **cookies, muffins, pancakes** or **cake**. Add in some of the lactogenic ingredients listed above for oatmeal, and you're good to go.

Beverages

Drinks that are rich in electrolytes and essential mineral salts are often helpful for supply. Electrolytes are naturally found in green vegetables and coconut water.

Beverages mothers say support their supply include horchata, coconut water, green powder mixes and freshly juiced or blended vegetable juices. Gatorade is often used as well. Gatorade is ok once in a while in a pinch, but the natural drinks are much healthier and can be used as a daily support.

Carbonated beverages might suppress a mother's supply. If you drink carbonated water or soft drinks, carefully observe your response afterwards. The same holds true anything that is sweetened with artificial sweeteners. Stevia, an herbal 0-calorie sweetener, is an option mothers can add to their food and beverages.

Hunger

When building your milk supply, your hunger will probably increase and you may even gain a little weight. When your supply is reliable, after six weeks or so, you can reduce your food portions and see if the extra weight begins to come off.

You will have plenty of time to regain your former figure. Now is your the time to breastfeed your baby.

Reach Out for Guidance and Support

If you have any questions at all, reach out for information and support. Your local LLL-Leader, LE or LC, your hospital or private IBCLC, and your WIC center can help you move through any challenges and go on to nurse your baby.

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