

Eating well when breastfeeding twins & triplets

Te kainga pai ina whāngai ana i ngā māhanga, ngā takitoru rānei

Breast milk provides the best food for your pēpi (babies) as they grow. It is the only food and drink they need for the first 6 months of their life. Even after 6 months, you can continue breastfeeding your pēpi while introducing other foods.

Breastfeeding has many important benefits for mothers and pēpi. You can read about these benefits on *Overview of breastfeeding* (go to www.healthinfo.org.nz and search for “breastfeeding overview”).



Breastfeeding takes time to get going and there can be some challenges along the way. Most women say it can take up to 6 weeks to feel relaxed and confident about breastfeeding. It will help if you can get support from your partner and whānau (family) during this time.

There is a lot of information and support available to help you learn how to breastfeed and answer any concerns you have. For more information see *Getting help with breastfeeding* (go to www.healthinfo.org.nz and search for “breastfeeding help”).

Having enough milk

Whether they will have enough milk is a common concern among mothers about to breastfeed twins or triplets.

Your supply of milk will adjust to what your pēpi need. Mothers feeding twins or triplets can produce enough milk for their pēpi if breastfeeding and expressing regularly.

The more you breastfeed or express, the more adequate your milk supply will be. Your midwife can give you information on expressing.

Eating to produce enough milk

To produce enough milk, you will need to eat more food and drink more fluids than usual.

You will need approximately 500 to 600 kcals per pēpi each day. This is on top of the amount of food you would eat before you were pregnant.

- Twins: 1,000 to 1,200 kcal extra.
- Triplets: 1,500 to 1,800 kcal extra.
- Quads: 2,000 to 2,400 kcal extra.

This may mean eating 6 to 8 times a day.



Regularly include protein- and calcium-rich foods such as dairy products (milk, yoghurt and cheese).

Your nutrient needs are very high, so choose healthy and nutritious foods at all meal and snack times.

Food examples

100 kcal snacks

- 1 banana
- 1 cup of fruit salad
- 10 dried apricots
- 14 cashews, almonds or hazelnuts
- 1 slice of bread
- 2 small eggs
- a slice of cheese
- 2 large sushi pieces
- frozen yoghurt (small tub)
- 2 Weet-Bix with milk
- ½ can baked beans
- 200 ml milk

200 kcal snacks

- 1 muesli bar or muffin
- ½ cup Greek yoghurt or 1 cup fruit yoghurt
- 200 ml fruit and yoghurt smoothie
- 2 scoops ice cream
- 1 cup light muesli with milk
- 1 cup rice, pasta or pasta salad
- small bread bun filled with ham and cheese
- large baked potato with light sour cream
- 1 piece of toast topped with cheese and tomato
- 3 crackers with avocado
- flavoured milk product, such as Up&Go, CalciYum or Milo

Fluids

You may find you get very thirsty.

- Drink to your thirst but try to have at least 12 cups of fluid a day including some milk or diluted fruit juice.
- Have a snack and a drink ready before you start feeding your pēpi. Having a drink yourself every time you breastfeed or express is a good way to remember to have enough fluids.
- Take a large glass or bottle of water with you to bed for during the night.
- Avoid alcohol. If you want to have a drink, you will need to express and discard your breast milk for at least an hour afterwards for each standard drink you have. You will need enough previously expressed breast milk to feed your pēpi over this time.

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