



RDN Resources for Consumers:

Meal Planning Guide and Resources for Pregnant & Breastfeeding Vegetarians

These guidelines are the suggested minimum number of servings for lactating women. Some women may need additional servings and/or added fats to maintain desirable body weight.

Meal Planning Guide for Pregnant & Breastfeeding Vegetarians				
Food Group	Serving Size	# of Svgs. (pregnancy)	# of Svgs. (Breastfeeding)	Comments
Grains	1 slice bread; ½ cup cooked cereal or pasta; ¾ - 1 cup ready-to-eat cereal	6	6	Choose whole-grains. Brown rice, oats, whole-grain breads & pasta, millet, quinoa, bulgur, and amaranth
Vegetables	½ cup cooked vegetables; 1 cup raw vegetables; ¾ cup vegetable juice	4	4	Choose calcium-rich vegetables often: e.g. kale, broccoli, bok choy, Chinese cabbage, okra
Fruits	1 medium fruit; ½ cup canned fruit; ¼ cup dried fruit; ¾ cup fruit juice	2	2	Choose calcium-rich foods often: calcium-fortified juice, figs
Legumes, nuts, seeds, milks	½ cup cooked beans, tofu, tempeh, textured vegetable protein (TVP); 3 ounces of veggie meats (veggie burger, deli slices, etc.); 2 tbsp. nuts, seeds, nut or seed butter; 1 cup fortified soy or low-fat or fat-free cow's milk; 1 cup yogurt; 1 egg	7	8	Choose calcium-rich foods often: calcium-fortified plant milks, dairy products, calcium-set tofu, almond butter, tahini, tempeh, almonds, soybeans
Fats	1 tsp. oil, salad dressing, butter, margarine, ghee or 2 tablespoons mashed avocado	3	3	

Choose high calcium foods from each of the food groups (e.g. calcium-fortified breakfast cereals, bok choy, broccoli, collards, Chinese cabbage, kale, mustard greens, okra, calcium-fortified orange juice, dairy products, calcium-fortified soy milk, tempeh, calcium-set tofu, almonds).

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Here's one way that daily food servings can be divided into 3 meals and 3 snacks. This can be modified to suit your eating style and preferences.

Breakfast: 1 serving of legumes, nuts, seeds, or milk; 1 serving of grains; 1 serving of fruit; 1 serving of fat

Mid-morning snack: 1 serving of legumes, nuts, seeds, or milk; 1 serving of grains

Lunch: 1 serving of legumes, nuts, seeds, or milk (2 servings for lactation); 2 servings of grains; 1 serving of fat; 1 serving of vegetables

Mid-afternoon snack: 1 serving of legumes, nuts, seeds, or milk; 1 serving of vegetables

Dinner: 2 servings of legumes, nuts, seeds, or milk; 1 serving of grains; 1 serving of fat; 2 servings of vegetables

Evening snack: 1 serving of legumes, nuts, seeds, or milk; 1 serving of grains; 1 serving of fruit

Additional Resources

1. Build a Healthy Eating Routine When You're Pregnant or Breastfeeding https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/sites/default/files/2021-12/DGA_Pregnancy_FactSheet-508c.pdf, 2021.
2. Mangels R. Your Complete Vegan Pregnancy. Avon, MA: Adams Media, 2019.
3. Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM) Pregnancy. <https://www.pcrm.org/good-nutrition/plant-based-diets/pregnancy>
4. Vegan Health. Pregnancy, Infants, and Children. <https://veganhealth.org/pregnancy-infants-and-children/>, 2022.
5. The Vegetarian Resource Group. Vegan Nutrition in Pregnancy and Childhood. https://www.vrg.org/nutrition/vegan_pregnancy_brochure.pdf, 2009.

The content found in this handout is intended for informational purposes only and is not intended to serve as a substitute for the consultation, diagnosis, and/or medical treatment of a qualified physician or healthcare provider. Please use this handout in conjunction with your dietitian.
