

For Maximum Nurturing, **Warmth**, and Comfort

\*\* Adjust your diet to match your likes and allergies

### **Food for your healing journey**

Broth, soups, stews, stewed fruits

Warm cooked grains

Chicken, slow-cooked lamb, beef/bison

Custards, steamed puddings

Warm milk, soft goat cheese, unsweetened whole-milk yogurt, hard cheese (use in moderation)

Fish not more than twice a week

Sea vegetables

Avocados, coconut, olives (whole foods or oils)

Fat stirred into everything (grass-fed butter, coconut oil, coconut milk, ghee)

Warming \*\*ginger, cinnamon, cumin, turmeric,

Herbal teas and infusions

### **Other postpartum diet tips**

Jars of store-bought kimchee and/or sauerkraut: Use both on congee (rice porridge) and Mother's Bowls to add flavor, boost nutrition, aid digestion and elimination, and get immune-boosting probiotics in your diet. The unpasteurized kind is best, with enzymes and probiotics still intact.

### **FRUITS**

Fresh is best for the first 40 days for smoothies (avoid cold drinks), alone or added to your porridge (congee or oats). Any seasonal fruit you love, like apples and pears, can be easily simmered with water plus a little ginger to make delicious servings of warm, stewed fruit.

Try to buy organic fruits and vegetables if possible and locally grown if possible.

## **VEGETABLES**

Onions (yellow) and garlic: These are used frequently in soups.

Shallots and green (or spring) onions are also used fairly frequently.

**\*\*Ginger:** Keep a big knob on hand, stored in a plastic bag in the fridge. Note: Ginger can increase blood flow. If you notice that your postpartum bleeding has intensified after consuming dishes that include ginger, avoid those recipes for two weeks (when postpartum bleeding slows significantly) or omit it from the recipe.

**Greens:** Buy a variety for soups, bowls, and smoothies. Pick any greens that are fresh, appealing, and local, if possible. Examples: spinach, kale, Swiss chard, collard greens, and spicy greens like mizuna and arugula. Dandelion, nettles, and turnip greens are also fair game. It's also fine to have frozen spinach in the freezer as a backup!

**Root vegetables:** Keep a stash of your favorites for roasting. This can include sweet potatoes, white potatoes, purple yams, squash, carrots.

**Mushrooms:** Your choice, shiitake, white button, oyster... etc.

**Other seasonal vegetables that will offer high nutrition include:** Turnips, radishes, rutabaga, peas, green beans, nettles, and celery root. All of these can be added to your soups, stews and grain bowls.

Be moderate with cruciferous vegetables (cauliflower, brussels sprouts, broccoli, bok choy, cabbage). These can be hard to digest and also affect the baby's digestion. You can test these, but if they aren't your favorites you can avoid them during your first 40 days.

## **EGGS, MEAT, AND FISH (for non-vegetarians/vegans)**

Have your choices of the following in the fridge, freezer, or pantry. Replenish as necessary.

**Eggs:** Treat yourself to pasture-raised eggs to get the maximum nutritional bonus. Their yolks should be bright orange. Eggs from local sources (farmer's markets or small farms) usually trump organic-labeled eggs in the grocery store. These "organic" eggs may be from chickens that were kept in cages and fed an all-grain diet, which isn't ideal. Free-range and omnivorous chickens (who have eaten insects and such) and their eggs are best.

**Meat:** Chicken, beef, lamb, and pork are all used here, but you can easily adapt things with other types like turkey, bison, duck, or even wild-caught game like venison. Recipes use whole chickens or chicken parts, ground red meat or sliced flank, and sausages.

**Fresh or frozen whole fish or fillets:** It's a wonderful resource. Canned wild salmon, sardines, mackerel, and herring are excellent provisions for the pantry and readily available at most grocery stores.

**Bones:** For broth, made in advance or at any time during first forty days. In addition to typical beef, chicken, or pork "soup bones," seek out knuckle and marrow bones, pig's feet (trotters), and chicken feet when you can. It is recommended to get these items from pastured animals that have been raised outside, not factory-farmed or grain-fed animals-if your grocery does not have these, farmer's markets and local ranches and farms often do, at great prices. Adding these parts to your broth when possible gives it a superb nutritional boost, with lots of healing gelatin.

**What to look for:** Grass-fed and pasture-raised meats, eggs, and dairy will give a healthier fatty-acid profile than grain-fed ones, meaning a better balance of omega-3 to omega-6, and have more essential vitamins. Buying from a local farm that sells meat is often good as they usually have organic practices, even if they don't pay the extra fee to use the label "certified organic."

## **DRIED FRUIT, NUTS, AND SEEDS**

**Dried Fruit:** Any and all of your choice. Prunes can be good for encouraging your elimination; Turkish figs, are delicious and may satisfy a craving for sweets-and the seeds are mild laxatives, which addresses the constipation that can occur after birth. Unsulphured and unsweetened dried fruit is best, if you can get it.

**Nuts:** Almonds, cashews, macadamia, hazelnuts, walnuts, pecans, and pistachios, if you like them and are not allergic. Raw or dry-roasted nuts are best. If you can, avoid the oil roasted and salted ones. You can always add your own salt later if you like.

**Seeds:** Chia, flax, hemp, sunflower, and white and black sesame seeds

## **BEANS AND GRAINS**

**Beans:** Adzuki beans are the easiest beans to digest, small, and non-gas forming. They're used in congees, stews, and bowls. Garbanzos (chickpeas) are thrown into stews, but other beans of your choice (white, black, kidney, pinto) can be added, too. Canned beans are most convenient but bulk-bought dried beans are very economical choices for a family, if you are familiar with preparing them.

**Lentils:** Red, green, black-and don't forget about the tinier varieties, like Le Puy, that cook faster.

**Rice:** It's always helpful to have a variety on hand. White and sticky (also called glutinous) rices are most often used in congees, and brown, basmati, black, and wild rice are other options for bowls and sides.

**Oats:** You can use steel-cut oats and regular rolled oats, organic if possible. They're good to have on hand for pancakes, oatmeal, congees, even comforting cookies. Something that lasts in the pantry

and is super grounding and warming, oats are a good source of iron and may help produce more breast milk. They are also available in gluten-free versions.

Other whole grains of your choice can include gluten-containing ones such as barley, helpful to aid in lactation, and non-gluten grains like quinoa, millet, amaranth, and buckwheat (not actually a grain, but a delicious and hearty grain-like food).

Noodles: Any type. This could be thin Asian-style noodles made of rice, soba (buckwheat), or eggs, or thicker ones made of wheat, corn, and even bean, and/or pasta made with the same ingredients. They are great and quick additions to broths, soups, and stews. If you're using gluten-free noodles and other packaged goods, watch out for xanthum gum (which can upset your stomach; many people are sensitive to it) and try to choose non-GMO brands whenever possible.

Polenta: A great and easy addition to stews and bowls.

## **DAIRY PRODUCTS AND ALTERNATIVES**

Milk, yogurt, cream, kefir, and cheese: These typically cooling foods are **not** used a lot for the first 40 days after birth, but if you like and enjoy them, by all means have them on hand. Interestingly, goat milk is considered a warming food (it is much easier to digest than cow's milk). Organic dairy is well worth the cost to minimize your and baby's exposure to toxins. Consume dairy foods warm when possible and use them in moderation; if baby seems to have digestive distress after you've eaten or drunk lots of dairy, consider backing off.

Grass-fed butter: An amazing postpartum kitchen staple. In one small block of buttercup-yellow fat, you get loads more fat-soluble vitamins than in regular butter (A, E, and D, and the equally essential vitamin K) and crucial micronutrients like those all-important fatty acids for baby's development. Lavishing grass-fed butter onto your cooked

greens will help you absorb their vitamins better, and, if you cook meat in it, it helps you digest the protein better.

Coconut milk: Coconut is another traditional warming food-wonderfully rich in fat! You might want to use light coconut milk because it is cut with water and is easier to use in smoothies than full-fat coconut milk (which you can of course cut with water yourself). Try to buy it without xanthum gum or sugar.

Almond, hemp, hazelnut, oat, and other nondairy milks: Consider having a few boxes on hand for smoothies and to drink straight when you can't make fresh nut milks. Try to buy a brand without xanthum gum or sweeteners.

## **MORE PANTRY ITEMS**

Nut and seed butters: Almond butter, peanut butter (look for non-GMO and unsweetened), sunflower seed butter or any other nut butter out there, like cashew or walnut, are perfect for snacks, smoothies, and treats. When you need a quick (and quiet) hit of food, peanut or almond butter right out of the jar is comforting and filling.

Coconut Manna, sold in jars, is a super-healthy way to treat your body to saturated fat.

Bone broth or stock: When you don't have homemade broth on hand, boxes of vegetable, chicken, and beef broth are a decent substitute. Look for organic and sugar-free kinds. Frozen bone broth can also be ordered in bulk from artisanal producers. Though pricey, this is the real deal and perfect for adding to a wish list.

Canned tomatoes and tomato paste: Fresh is always preferred but use organic cans or tubes of tomatoes and paste in the winter months when it's not fresh.

Organic popcorn: A favorite DIY snack, popcorn has become even tastier and more digestible thanks to the new "heirloom popcorn"

varieties now available. At the very least, buy organic (non-GMO) popcorn.

Shredded coconut: Used as a fun add-in to smoothies, desserts, and sweet congees.

Cacao or cocoa powder: For nut milks, smoothies. Cacao powder is the raw, unprocessed form, with more essential nutrients like magnesium than cocoa.

Boxed coconut water: This optional pantry ingredient is nature's sports drink, sweet and replenishing.

Pure vanilla extract: This sweet and fragrant flavoring is so functional; use it to enhance smoothies, sweets, nut milks, cocoas, and teas. Available in traditional alcohol extract form or in glycerin (alcohol-free). Avoid imitation vanilla or ones with sugar.

Black or oolong tea: For drinking in moderation.

Nutritional yeast: This natural seasoning, beloved by vegans in particular, can be sprinkled on lots of dishes to add a satisfying "umami" taste (a cheesy, meaty, savory flavor) and loads of B vitamins, which help your body extract energy from food and help replenish red blood cells.

## **SWEETENERS**

Include a couple of these healthier options in your pantry to flavor sweets and teas.

Honey: Try to use raw honey (available at health food stores or farmer's markets). Since it hasn't been heated, it retains amazing health benefits, intact enzymes and minerals, and proteins. If it comes from a local source, it's an antidote for seasonal allergies where you live as well.

Maple syrup: The real kind, not the corn-syrup blend.

Coconut sugar: A delicious alternative to brown sugar with some good trace minerals, comes in sap or granule form. Especially handy if you don't use honey or maple syrup.

Stevia: It can be handy to have a pack of this noncaloric powdered herb to sweeten things without refined sugar.

## **OILS AND VINEGARS**

A selection of oils infuse your diet with good fat and vinegars, and create great flavors in all kinds of dishes. As you get familiar with your oils and flavorings, you can create a harmony of sweet, sour, and salty tastes by using the same few staples. Every traditional kitchen has a cluster of these bottles next to the stove; pick a few and use throughout the recipes.

Sesame oil: A time-honored healing food, sesame oil is used for cooking and can also be used for massage-for mother and baby. Pick organic, expeller- pressed, or unrefined oil.

Avocado oil: Formerly a specialty item, this oil is now found abundantly and is a great cooking oil, as any saturated fat is, since it's stable at high temperatures.

Coconut oil: Consider acquiring a large jar of this fantastic saturated fat. High in essential omega-3s, including lauric acid, a rare fatty-acid that is also found in breast milk, coconut oil is great for high-heat cooking, can be spooned onto steamed greens or cooked grains, and is a great moisturizing and massage oil for mom's and baby's skin. Refined cooking oil is odorless, so it won't give such a "coconut" flavor to your cooking.

Soy sauce, wheat-free tamari, (soy-free) Bragg Liquid Aminos, nama shoyu (raw soy sauce), or coconut amino acids: Lots of great options and it's your choice. A small amount of these fermented soy (or soy-tasting) condiments add a lot of tangy, salty flavor to soups. You can use them instead of (or in addition to) sea salt.

Vinegar: Apple cider and balsamic vinegars are the options most often used in the recipes.

Miso: This fermented soybean paste comes from Japanese cuisine and adds a satisfyingly salty, savory flavor when stirred into soups and grains or used as a dip. There are several varieties-yellow miso has the mildest flavor. Keep miso in the fridge.

## **SALT**

Himalayan (pink) or Celtic (gray) sea salt: Salt is important for hydration and circulation. Choose a colored salt, not a plain white one, for a rainbow of minerals. Keep in mind that if the gray Celtic sea salt is still slightly moist, which is often the case at health food stores, it's packed with even more minerals!

### Minimize or avoid these foods

Salads, raw vegetables

Crunchy crackers, chips

Heavy meat, like steaks, organ meats

Ice cream, sorbet, gelato

Sweetened skim yogurt, sweetened kefir

Processed and refined cooking oils (canola, sunflower)

Strong caffeine, coffee

Wine and beer (avoid or use in moderation) avoid liquor

### Resources

*The First Forty Days*, by Heng Ou

\*\* Avoid ginger if you have excess bleeding