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# HEALTHLINE

Paramount's Monthly Magazine



*Patience and  
perseverance have a  
magical effect before  
which difficulties  
disappear and  
obstacles vanish*

- John Quincy Adams

**Breastfeeding  
Awareness  
Week**

**Nutrition  
in Children**

**Exercises  
for New  
Mothers**

**Relaxation  
Techniques**



# Breastfeeding Awareness Week

Breastfeeding is a major part of motherhood, especially in the Indian culture. However, breastfeeding the child solely depends on the choice and ability of new mothers. While it comes easy to some mothers, most still struggle with breastfeeding finding it difficult to get help with this process. According to a survey reported in The Hindu, 70% of the mothers find breastfeeding a challenging experience. Regardless, majority of them still continue to nurse the babies for about a year or so.



Some challenges according to the survey done by Momspresso, a platform which provides content for mothers, in collaboration with Medela, a supplier of breast pumps and breastfeeding accessories, include:



"The top six breastfeeding challenges faced by Indian mothers were: early day challenges such as sore and cracked nipples, latching problem, and engorged breasts (34.7%); exhaustion from waking up in the middle of the night, too many feeding sessions and long feeding sessions (31.8%); baby biting (26.61%); lactation issues (22.7%); problems with breastfeeding in public, including lack of facilities, perceived restriction (17.81%); and post-partum depression (17.42%)."

As the pandemic hit the world, another issue that arose was also around new mothers and their babies. A report published in The BML says "Worldwide, breastfeeding rates have dropped by 40-50% in some hospitals during the pandemic. Before the pandemic only 41% of babies in India breastfed within an hour of being born, a number that has slid lower during the pandemic."

In fact, the report also suggested how milk formula companies are advertising their products more and a certain brand official even suggests that mothers who test positive for covid-19 should stay away from their babies, a step that is unnecessary according to WHO guidelines.

## Benefits for the baby

- Provides ideal nutrition to the baby.
- Contains important antibodies.
- Breastfeeding may reduce disease risk.
- Promotes healthy baby weight.



## Benefits to the mother

- Helps contract uterus.
- May help reduce weight.
- Helps lower the risk of postpartum depression.
- Linked to reduced risk of some diseases like breast and ovarian cancer.
- May pause menstruation.

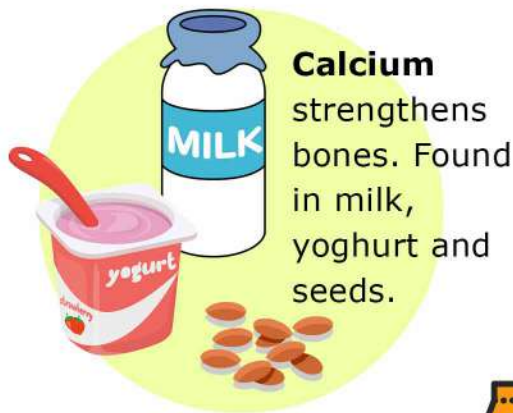


## Importance of nutrition in early years

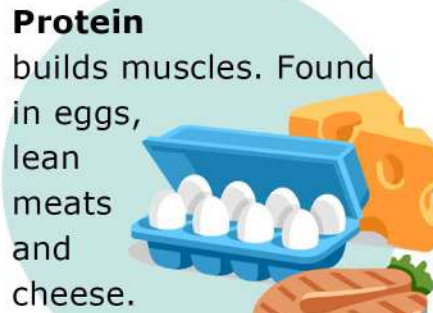
The early years for children mark to be important as you get them ready for the world, physically, emotionally and mentally. A nutritious meal is one of the most important factors in a child's development, not just for getting vitamins and minerals but also so that the child develops a healthy relationship with food and really understands the importance of what goes in their body. Here are some tips:



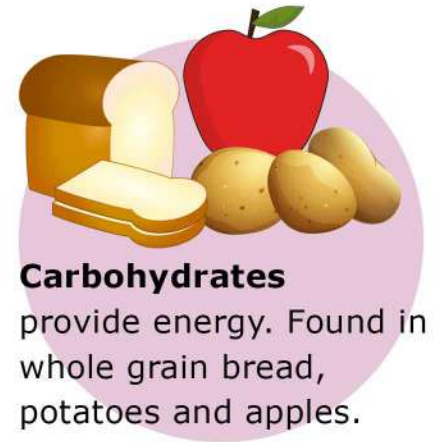
According to some research, fish, broccoli and berries are just a few foods shown to improve cognitive functions and memory in children. Conversely, 'anti-nutrients' such as refined sugar, bad fats and additives can negatively affect a child's mind, even making them feel hazy and less focused.



**Calcium** strengthens bones. Found in milk, yoghurt and seeds.



**Protein** builds muscles. Found in eggs, lean meats and cheese.



**Carbohydrates** provide energy. Found in whole grain bread, potatoes and apples.

**Iron** makes healthy blood. Found in legumes, lamb, spinach and quinoa.



**Essential fats** help the body absorb other vitamins. Found in fish, avocados and nuts.

### Healthy and child-friendly habits you can begin to form:

- Keep snacks simple: a piece of fruit or handful of nuts.
- Eat the rainbow! Create colourful plates with a variety of vegetables.
- Involve little ones in cooking, even if they are just watching while you explain the process they are still learning.
- Limit sugary drinks, including juices.
- Take it slow: don't rush mealtimes. It can be frustrating when children eat slowly, but this helps them assess their appetite and stop when full.
- Do not punish a child for not eating, as it can develop a negative association. In some cases, they may feel the need to eat everything on their plate, thereby overeating and not listening to their bodies.
- Avoid using food as a reward, as it can teach them to rely on it for comfort. Praise and encouragement, sometimes with a hug, can be enough reward for a child.

*It is key to understand that the child's relationships with food needs to be developed in a healthy manner to ensure they follow that lifestyle throughout their adult years as well. Take help from your doctor if you need some professional help to understand this experience better.*



# How exercise helps new mothers

Post-pregnancy exercise is helpful to mothers in several ways, here's how:



## 1. Pelvic floor exercises



- Tighten your pelvic floor muscles (the ones used to stop the flow of urination).
- Hold for 10 seconds.
- Repeat throughout the day.

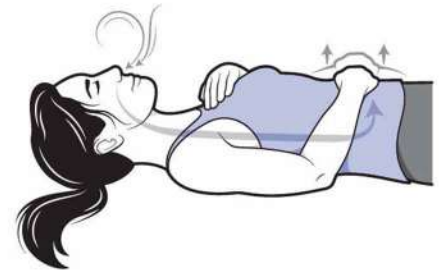
## 3. Walking



## 4. Cat-Cow asana



## 2. Diaphragmatic breathing



- Lie flat on the floor on a yoga mat.
- Relax your body, focusing on releasing the tension from your toes to the top of your head.
- Put a hand on your chest and another on your stomach.
- Take a deep breath in through the nose. This will expand your stomach, but your chest should remain relatively still. Breathe in for 2 to 3 seconds.
- Exhale slowly while keeping one hand on the chest and one on the stomach.
- Repeat several times for 2 to 3 minutes.

# Relaxation techniques

## 1

**Breath focus.** In this simple, powerful technique, you take long, slow, deep breaths (also known as abdominal or belly breathing). As you breathe, you gently disengage your mind from distracting thoughts and sensations. Breath focus can be especially helpful for people with eating disorders to help them focus on their bodies in a more positive way. However, this technique may not be appropriate for those with health problems that make breathing difficult, such as respiratory ailments or heart failure.



## 2

**Mindfulness meditation.** This practice involves sitting comfortably, focusing on your breathing, and bringing your mind's attention to the present moment without drifting into concerns about the past or the future. This form of meditation has enjoyed increasing popularity in recent years. Research suggests it may be helpful for people with anxiety, depression, and pain.



## 3


**Yoga, tai chi, and qigong.** These three ancient arts combine rhythmic breathing with a series of postures or flowing movements. The physical aspects of these practices offer a mental focus that can help distract you from racing thoughts. They can also enhance your flexibility and balance. But if you are not normally active, have health problems, or a painful or disabling condition, these relaxation techniques might be too challenging. Check with your doctor before starting them.



Source: Harvard Medical

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