



# Stark Report

Onondaga County Health Department  
WIC Program

July-Sept 2013  
Newsletter

## Pregnancy Corner: Calcium

Calcium is a very important mineral throughout pregnancy. A woman's body needs a certain amount to ensure that her baby is developing strong bones before birth. A baby's teeth also require calcium as they begin to develop while in the womb. The unborn baby becomes the body's top priority during pregnancy. If a woman is not taking in enough calcium, her blood will start to strip it from her bones. Losing too much calcium during pregnancy can lead to osteoporosis which causes weak brittle bones that break easily and may have a harder time healing. A healthy diet during pregnancy can help to prevent this.

Women need 1,000 mg of calcium per day. Women under age 18 require an additional 300 mg because their bones are still developing. Three 8 ounce glasses of low fat or fat free milk will provide 900 mg of calcium. WIC offers up to four gallons of milk per month to pregnant women on their program which provides most of this need. Milk also contains Vitamin D which is needed for the body to absorb calcium.

Prenatal vitamins contain 15-20% of the body's need for calcium. The full daily amount cannot be taken in a pill because women's bodies can only take in so much of this mineral at a time. It is important to drink milk throughout the day to retain all the calcium the body needs. Having milk with meals is an easy way to accomplish this. Women should also talk to their doctor before taking a calcium supplement during pregnancy.

Some mothers crave large amounts of milk or other dairy foods during pregnancy. Women should not take in excessive amounts of these foods because too much calcium can lead to common pregnancy problems such as constipation and kidney stones. Large amounts of calcium can also prevent the body from absorbing iron which can lead to anemia.

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### **Promote healthy bones every day!**

- Prepare canned tomato soup, creamed soups and oatmeal with milk instead of water.
- Make instant pudding using milk.
- Make a smoothie with milk and your favorite summer fruit
- Make a vegetable dip with yogurt.
- Cook with beans and lentils (lentils are a great source of calcium and can be purchased with WIC checks!)
- Add cheese to cooked vegetables.
- Snack on a handful of almonds (a good source of calcium)
- Try tofu (ask your WIC nutritionist for recipes if you would like to add this to your checks!)
- Have calcium-fortified orange juice (WIC food) with breakfast.

## ***Breastfeeding Corner:*** **WIC's Peer Counselor Program and Breastfeeding Services**

The WIC Program is known as “The Nation’s Top Nutrition Program” because it has been shown to improve the health of families enrolled. It has also been shown that one of the most important things a mother can do for her new baby is to breastfeed. Breastfeeding helps give babies a healthy start in life. Because breastfeeding is important, WIC has taken steps to help give mothers the extra tools and support needed to have breastfeeding success.

One popular breastfeeding service offered by WIC is the Peer Counselor Program. A WIC Peer Counselor is a mother who has experience with breastfeeding. She has been trained to help with basic breastfeeding concerns and wants to help other moms. Any pregnant woman who is thinking about breastfeeding, or any mother who wants a little extra help and/or support with breastfeeding can get a Peer Counselor. Just ask your WIC nutritionist. You can connect with your Peer Counselor in many ways. You can meet her in clinic. You can talk to her on the phone. You can send her an email. Or you can send her a text. However you choose, your Peer Counselor will be there to listen to you and give you support.



In addition to the Peer Counselor Program, WIC also does other things to support breastfeeding:

- Breast Pump Program
- Extra food for mothers who are fully breastfeeding (not receiving formula from the WIC Program)
- Babies who are fully breastfeeding (not receiving formula from the WIC Program) receive extra foods at 6 months of age
- Breastfeeding website for WIC moms, [www.breastfeedingpartners.org](http://www.breastfeedingpartners.org)
- Registered Dietitian services
- Certified Lactation Counselor services
- Breastfeeding information class
- Breastfeeding –friendly WIC clinic
- Ask for our new “Breastfeeding Services” brochure!

For more information about breastfeeding or to see if you qualify for WIC, call the WIC office at 435-3304.

***Babies were born to breastfeed. Always have been. Always will be.***

## WIC Eligibility

In order to receive WIC benefits you or your child must meet 4 criteria:

1. **Residency:** You must be a resident of New York State.
2. **Categorical:** You must be a pregnant, breast feeding or post partum woman, an infant under the age of 1 year; or a child age 1-5 years.
3. **Be at nutritional or medical risk:** Your risk is determined at each certification appointment by the nutrition staff.
4. **Income eligible:** This is determined by assessing all household income. Household income includes all sources of income from “everyone who shares housing, income, and the consumption of goods and services.”

If the person who is certifying for WIC receives Medicaid, Food Stamps (SNAP) or TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), and provides WIC with the necessary documentation, the same documentation can be used as income verification to determine WIC eligibility. This is called Adjunctive Eligibility. However, the certification period for WIC is only as long as the certification of the adjunctive program.

It may be determined by the WIC staff that an Income Reassessment needs to be completed between WIC certification periods. It is extremely important that WIC participants be prepared at each WIC appointment. WIC participants need to bring current proof of household income for all household members to all WIC appointments. This is very important so that there is not any interruption of your WIC benefits. If you have questions regarding this, please speak with a WIC staff member. Thank you!

## WIC News

- The WIC office will be closed on Monday September 2<sup>nd</sup> for Labor Day.
- We are now issuing Farmer’s Market checks that can be used beginning June 1st through November 30th. Please make sure that you use all of your six Farmer’s Market checks by November 30th. Your WIC Nutritionist will tell you how many Farmer’s Market checks you used last year. Your goal should be to use all six so that your family can enjoy locally grown fruits and vegetables this summer. If you have a difficult time getting to the farmer’s market, try to use all of your checks during one visit to the farmer’s market or send a friend or relative to the market to cash the checks for your family.
- The Bayberry Plaza Farmer’s Market is every Wednesday from 8am-5pm in the parking lot in front of Kinney Drugs.
- Look for the Farm Fresh Mobile Market in neighborhoods throughout the city of Syracuse this summer. You can cash your Farmer’s Market checks or use your EBT card to purchase locally grown fruits and vegetables at the Farm Fresh Mobile Market.
- Join our group appointments at the WIC Program. Interact with your friends and neighbors and reduce your waiting times at your next clinic appointment. Please call the W.I.C. Program at 435-3304 to schedule your group appointment.
- The WIC Program values your participation! Please call our office at 435-3304 if your phone number or address changes so that we can contact you for appointment reminders.
- Please call the WIC office if you cannot make your WIC appointment so that this time can be offered to another WIC family.

# Here's What's Cooking

## Brown Rice: A Whole Grain Your Family Will Love!

### **Chicken & Rice Burrito**

1. Place cooked rice and shredded cooked chicken on a tortilla.
2. Top with a little salsa and shredded cheddar cheese.
3. Roll up and heat in the microwave.

### **Spanish Rice**

1. Stir together 2 cups of cooked rice and 1 can (15 ounces) chopped tomatoes with peppers in a skillet.
2. Stir and cook until the liquid is absorbed.
3. Season with chili powder and garlic powder.



### **Veggies & Rice**

1. Heat 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil in a large skillet. Add 2 cups of vegetables – chopped zucchini, onion, peppers or pea pods.
2. Stir and cook vegetables until slightly soft, about 2 to 3 minutes. Add a small amount of water if needed while cooking.
3. Add 1 cup cooked rice and 1 cup chopped tomatoes to cooked vegetables in skillet. Stir and cook for 1 minute.

### **Make Perfect Rice**

There are 3 sizes of brown or white rice – short, medium and long grain. The most common rice that we eat is medium grain rice. Long grain rice is light and separates easily. Short grain rice is round shaped and sticks together when cooked.

- Follow the directions on the package when cooking rice. Rice is easy to cook.
- Try brown rice. It takes about twice as long to cook.
- Rice absorbs a lot of water. One cup of uncooked rice will make 3 cups of cooked rice.
- Cook extra rice for your next meal.

Cooked rice can be kept in a covered container in your refrigerator for up to 1 week or can be frozen for up to 6 months.

**Onondaga County Health Department WIC Program**  
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Standards for participation in the WIC Program are the same for everyone regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, political beliefs or sex.

**Onondaga County Health Department**

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