



TEACHER GUIDE

Letters from Your Unborn Baby My Seventh Month



Dear MOM,

We're almost there, mom. Are you noticing all the changes?

ABOUT ME

I can do many things now like suck my thumb, hiccup, cry and react to light and sound. I am about 16 inches long and I weigh about 3 pounds. I will be ready to be born in two short months!

ABOUT YOU

You may be feeling leg cramps, or backaches now. Back and leg pain is from me pushing against your back. Sometimes I will move and shift my weight and sometimes I will stay in one position for a long time. If my position causes you discomfort rest or try a heating pad. Also try this exercise to fix back pain. It is called a cat stretch:

To relieve pressure on your spine, get down on your hands and knees with your back in a naturally relaxed position. Keep your head straight and your neck in a straight line with your spine. Next, hump your back, tightening your abdomen and buttocks and allow your head to drop all the way down. Slowly release your back and release your head to the original position. Repeat several times.

To prevent backaches follow these tips:

1. Gain the proper amount of weight.
2. Don't wear high heels.
3. Bend at the knee, not at the waist when lifting heavy things.
4. Try not to stand for long periods of time.
5. Sleep on a firm mattress.
6. Get plenty of rest and relaxation.
7. Exercise throughout your pregnancy.

EATING OUT

Do you enjoy eating out with your friends? You can eat a nutritious diet in restaurants if you follow **MyPyramid** guidelines.

DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS

1. Eat a variety of foods.
2. Aim for a healthy weight by staying within your calorie needs.
3. Emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products.
4. Include lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts in your eating plan.
5. Choose foods low in *trans* fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars.
6. Be physically active each day.

In addition to the guidelines for healthy eating, there are additional guidelines for living healthy while you are pregnant with me:

7. Adopt an alcohol and drug-free lifestyle.
8. Plan to breastfeed me.

When you eat out, remember these tips:

1. Stick to a regular, small hamburger or cheeseburger. Stay away from double or 1/4 pound large-style sandwiches that have a lot of fat and extra calories.
2. Choose broiled or grilled fish or chicken. Limit deep fried and oily entrees.
3. Use low-fat cheese, lettuce, tomato, mustard, relish, onions and catsup to top off your sandwiches. Special sauces and mayonnaise add too much fat.
4. Skip french fries and potato chips. Try plain baked potatoes, green bean salads, coleslaw, or potato salad. Or, ask the cook if they have other vegetables instead of french fries.
5. If you order salads or salad bars, load up on the fresh vegetables. Limit the cheese (unless it is low-fat), meats, pasta salads and dessert sections, because these foods have too much fat. Most restaurants have low-calorie dressings. Ask if you don't see any. If you use regular dressing, add just enough for flavor. Salad dressings can have a lot of fat.
6. The best beverage options are milk, fruit juices or water. The shakes in most restaurants are high in fat, and regular soda is merely sugar water and flavorings. It is best to avoid the caffeine in soda, coffee and tea.

If you can't find anything on the menu that looks healthy, remember to eat fresh fruits and vegetables later for a snack. Don't forget to drink milk!

Look at this sample menu. What would you order from this restaurant?

HARRY'S DINER

MAIN DISH	SIDE ORDERS	BEVERAGES
Hamburger	French fries	Milkshake
Cheeseburger	Coleslaw	Soda
Double bacon burger	Applesauce	Diet soda
Fried fish sandwich	Onion rings	Coffee
Fried chicken	Hash browns	Iced tea
Turkey deli sandwich	Salad with regular dressing	Milk
Tuna melt	Salad with low-fat dressing	Fruit juice

Good choices from the MAIN DISHES are:

- Hamburger
- Cheeseburger
- Turkey deli sandwich*
- Tuna melt

* **Caution:** Hot dogs and luncheon meats should be reheated until steaming hot to reduce your risk of getting listeriosis which is a bacteria infection that can be harmful to mother and unborn baby.

Good choices from the SIDE ORDERS are:

- Coleslaw
- Salad with low-fat dressing
- Applesauce

Good choices from the BEVERAGES are:

- Milk
- Fruit juice

BREASTFEEDING

Have you thought about breastfeeding me? Here are some of the reasons why I want to be breastfed:

NUTRITION

The nutrition in human milk is perfect for me. Your breasts are designed to make milk that is special for me, with all the right nutrients to help me grow.

PROTECTION

Your milk has antibodies that will help prevent infection.

DIGESTION

Breast milk is digested easier than infant formula, so I'll spit up less when I receive breastmilk.

SPECIAL BOND

You and I will have a special bond when we nurse. You will help me know that I belong to you.

GOOD HEALTH

As a breastfed baby, I will be healthier. I won't have to go to the doctor as often as a formula-fed baby.

GET YOUR FIGURE BACK

Breastfeeding causes hormones to be released in your body so that you get your figure back sooner.

CHEAPER

Breastfeeding is cheaper and more convenient than bottle-feeding. You always have exactly what I need! You won't have to warm formula or fix bottles when I'm hungry at night or carry formula when we go out.

You may or may not have thought yet about how you want to feed me. If you have questions call your doctor or the health department. If you call the health department, ask to talk with a PEER COUNSELOR or a LACTATION CONSULTANT. A peer counselor is a woman like you that breastfed her baby. Peer counselors are easy to talk to. They can usually answer all your questions and concerns about breastfeeding. Peer counselors enjoy breastfeeding and want to tell you about it. A lactation consultant is a nurse or dietitian who is trained to teach about breastfeeding. They are especially helpful if you have questions while you are breastfeeding.

I am anxious to meet you Mom. I will write again next month.

Love, Your Baby

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