

Ideal bite

Quick and easy nutrition boosters for mom and baby. **BY ALLISON YOUNG**

What you put in your mouth takes on a whole new significance when you're eating for two. You are your baby's only source of nutrition, after all! Instead of just grabbing whatever grub is around, use food as a tool to promote baby's growth and development, as well as to prevent the not-so-glamorous side effects of pregnancy (ahem, constipation). Pack in as many valuable vitamins and nutrients as you can and expect a happier pregnancy and healthier baby. It's win-win!



1

Switch to spinach

Instead of lettuce, add nutrient-rich spinach to your sandwiches, salads and burgers for a boost of calcium, folate, vitamin A, vitamin C and iron. Since iron needs nearly double during pregnancy, it's important to consume foods that are packed with it. Munch on foods high in vitamin C, too, to enhance iron absorption, suggests Christine Avanti, nutritionist and author of *Skinny Chicks Don't Eat Salads*.

Bonus: Folate helps prevent spina bifida and other neural tube defects.



2

Shake things up

Craving a milkshake? Rather than reach for a calorie-laden concoction, cut the fat and up the antioxidants with a berry smoothie. "Blend together frozen strawberries and blueberries, whole milk and yogurt to get extra protein and calcium without all the extra sugar," says Esther Blum, MS, RD, author of *Secrets of Gorgeous*.

Bonus: Blueberries and strawberries are excellent sources of vitamin C, which aids in tissue formation (good for baby) and tissue repair (good for mom after baby).



3

Get salad smart

Skip croutons and go for slivered almonds. "Almonds cut the unhealthy saturated fats found in croutons while adding a dose of healthy fats and vitamin E," says Melinda Johnson, RD, a spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association. "Plus, the healthy fats in almonds help your body absorb more of the vitamins in the salad."

Bonus: A diet rich in vitamin E can help protect against Alzheimer's disease.