



## Diet plan for post-pregnant women and healthy hair

The emphasis of this diet is on foods that will not only help you get your figure back after having your baby but which will also supply those essential nutrients needed to get your hair looking healthy again, such as protein, vitamins A and C and zinc.

### HEALTHY HAIR FOODS

Nutrient	Hair health benefits	Where to find it?
<b>Protein</b>	The building block of hair and essential for hair growth	Fish, whole grains, nuts and seeds, eggs and milk
<b>Vitamin A</b>	Great for skin and boosting a healthy scalp	Broccoli, carrots and milk
<b>Vitamin C</b>	Useful for boosting circulation and ensuring a plentiful supply of oxygen to the scalp and hair	Citrus fruit, strawberries and potatoes
<b>Zinc</b>	Useful for boosting the body's absorption of protein and preventing hair loss	Seafood and meat
<b>Water</b>	An essential component of every hair strand, making up a quarter of its composition	Drink plenty throughout the day to top up your body's reserves

Portions are left up to you but I have highlighted the key nutrients included in each meal throughout the diet plan so you can see why they are beneficial to your hair. If you are breastfeeding your baby you will have increased requirements (quite a significant increase actually) so eat to match your hunger (the need for food).

For example, instead of one sandwich at lunchtime you may need two, or more pasta or potatoes than you used to have pre-pregnancy. However, don't confuse hunger with appetite (the desire for food) or you could end up eating more than you need and find the weight is coming off very slowly or even not at all. So we are not talking crash dieting to get you back in shape but sensible healthy eating – low fat foods, protein-rich foods, carbohydrate-rich foods, lots of fruit and vegetables and plenty of water to drink throughout the day, particularly if you are breast-feeding.

Alcohol and caffeine get into breast milk so you should continue to limit these if possible. The emphasis is also on meals that can be prepared quickly as time is usually of the essence when young babies are around!

## **General note**

Any meal that you don't like can be exchanged with another one but try not to repeat meals if possible or at least don't have them too often. This will ensure that you get the whole range of essential nutrients that your body and hair needs at this very special time.

## **Fluids**

It is important to keep up your fluid intake, particularly if you are breast-feeding. Water is an ideal choice but do enjoy other drinks as well including tea and coffee – like your food intake, try to introduce some variety rather than always having the same hot drink or the same juice.

# DAY 1

## Breakfast

Glass of unsweetened fruit juice

Wholegrain cereal with semi-skimmed milk, sliced banana and a sprinkling of nuts and /or seeds

*Wholegrains, nuts and seeds provide protein, milk provides protein, zinc and some vitamin A and fruit juice provides vitamin C.*

## Lunch

Wholemeal sandwich filled with salmon flakes (or canned salmon) and cucumber slices.

Pot of low fat fruit yogurt or fromage frais

Piece of fruit (apple, pear or seasonal fruit)

*Wholemeal bread provides protein, salmon and yogurt provide protein, zinc and and some vitamin A and fruit provides vitamin C.*

## Evening meal

Chicken stir-fry made with chopped chicken breast, packet of stir-fry vegetables (ideally containing broccoli and carrots), packet of stir-fry sauce and noodles. (A very nutritious meal made in minutes.)

Strawberries and natural yogurt

*Chicken provides protein and some zinc, broccoli and carrots provide vitamin A, strawberries provide vitamin C and yogurt provides protein, zinc and some vitamin A.*



## DAY 2

### Breakfast

Glass of unsweetened fruit juice

Wholemeal toast with honey, marmalade or jam

Pot of low fat fruit yogurt

Fruit juice provides vitamin C, wholemeal toast provides protein and yogurt provides protein, zinc and some vitamin A.

### Lunch

Salad made with cooked pasta, canned tuna, canned sweetcorn and salad vegetables of your choice (eg chopped tomatoes, cucumber and celery)

Pot of low fat fruit yogurt or fromage frais

Piece of fruit (banana, apple or seasonal fruit)

*Tuna provides protein and some zinc, yogurt provides protein, zinc and some vitamin A and fruit provides vitamin C.*

### Evening meal

Lean steak or lamb chop, grilled

New potatoes

Carrots and broccoli

Home-made or canned rice pudding or a mug of hot chocolate made with semi-skimmed milk

*Meat provides protein and zinc, potatoes provide vitamin C, carrots and broccoli provide vitamin A and milk provides protein, zinc and some vitamin A.*



# DAY 3

## Breakfast

Glass of unsweetened fruit juice

Wholemeal muffin toasted then topped with sliced banana, honey and pumpkin seeds (optional)

*Fruit juice provides vitamin C, wholemeal muffin provides protein as do pumpkin seeds.*

## Lunch

Tzatziki or low fat natural yogurt flavoured with mild mustard, tomato paste or very mild curry powder. Serve with strips of warmed wholemeal pitta bread.

Fresh fruit (apple, pear or seasonal fruits such as berries)

*Tzatziki provides protein, zinc and some vitamin A, wholemeal pitta bread provides protein and the fresh fruit provides vitamin C.*

## Evening meal

Grilled salmon steak served with home-made (or packet) parsley sauce

Boiled rice

Peas

Piece of fruit cake (bought or homemade)

*Salmon provides protein, zinc and vitamin A, milk in the sauce provides protein and some vitamin A and the peas provide some vitamin C.*



# DAY 4

## Breakfast

Glass of unsweetened fruit juice

Natural yogurt, large sliced banana, honey and chopped nuts

*Fruit juice provides vitamin C, yogurt provides protein, zinc and some vitamin A and nuts provide protein and some zinc.*

## Lunch

Eggs, boiled, poached or scrambled

Wholemeal bread, toasted

Flavoured milk drink (eg Yazoo, Friij, For Goodness Shakes)

*Eggs and wholemeal bread provide protein and the flavoured milk drink provides protein and some vitamin A.*

## Evening meal

Lamb cutlets, grilled with fat removed after cooking

Potatoes and sweet potatoes, boiled and mashed together

Green beans

Fresh fruit salad (or canned in fruit juice or light syrup) with low fat custard

*Lamb provides protein and zinc, potatoes provide vitamin C and sweet potatoes also provide carotene which the body can convert into vitamin A as well as vitamin C, fruit salad provides vitamin C and custard provides protein and some vitamin A.*



# DAY 5

## Breakfast

Glass of unsweetened fruit juice

Wholegrain cereal with semi-skimmed milk, sliced banana and a sprinkling of chopped nuts

*Fruit juice provides vitamin C, wholegrain cereal and nuts provide protein and milk provides protein, zinc and some vitamin A.*

## Lunch

Tuna and cucumber sandwich made with wholemeal bread and a little salad cream to combine the tuna

Low fat natural or strawberry yogurt with strawberries (fresh, frozen or canned in juice)

*Tuna provides protein and some zinc, wholemeal bread provides protein, yogurt provides protein, zinc and some vitamin A and strawberries are a good source of vitamin C.*

## Evening meal

Spaghetti Bolognese made with:-

Onions, canned chopped tomatoes, tomato puree, very lean minced beef and mixed herbs and served on spaghetti

Fresh fruits in a meringue nest with low fat natural yogurt

*Meat is a good source of protein and zinc, tomatoes and fresh fruits are a good source of vitamin C and yogurt provides protein, zinc and some vitamin A.*



# DAY 6

## Breakfast

Glass of unsweetened fruit juice

Eggs (boiled, scrambled, poached) with wholemeal bread and tomatoes

*Fruit juice and tomatoes provide vitamin C, eggs provide protein and zinc and wholemeal bread provides protein.*

## Lunch

Prawns tossed in low fat natural yogurt, flavoured with a little tomato puree served in a wholemeal pitta with shredded lettuce and cucumber slices

Seasonal fresh fruit served with low fat fromage frais or yogurt

*Prawns are a source of zinc, wholemeal bread a source of protein and fresh fruit provides vitamin C.*

## Evening meal

Roast chicken served with jacket potatoes, carrots and broccoli

Egg custard (home-made or bought)

*Chicken provides protein and some zinc, potatoes provide vitamin C and broccoli and carrots provide vitamin A.*



# DAY 7

## Breakfast

Wholegrain cereal with semi-skimmed milk, sliced banana and a sprinkling of chopped nuts

*Wholegrains provide protein, milk provides protein, zinc and some vitamin A and fruit juice provides vitamin C.*

## Lunch

Pasta salad with pumpkin seeds and cooked mixed vegetables (eg peas, carrots and sweetcorn) tossed in a low fat French dressing

Low fat fruit fromage frais

*Seeds provide protein and carrots provide vitamin A.*

## Evening meal

Fish pie made with any cooked white fish (e.g. cod or haddock), white sauce (home-made or bought), topped with mashed potatoes and browned under the grill

Peas

Bowl of strawberries (fresh, frozen or canned) with natural yogurt

*Fish is an excellent source of protein and zinc and potatoes, peas and strawberries all provide vitamin C.*

