

# *Touching Heaven*

Tonic and Delicious Postpartum Recipes from Ayurveda

Most of these recipes are suitable to nourish the special needs of early postpartum mothers, pregnancy, elders, travelers, and anyone else with high Vata. Baby of course benefits greatly this way, in or out of Mommie's tummy. Please understand this is not meant to represent a complete discussion about needs for any of these times.

**Ysha Oakes**

**Postpartum AyurDoula and Ayurvedic Cook**

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## Dedication

In honor of my mother and father, and all mothers and fathers who have will power and loved their way through their weeks and months after birth without the blessings of "Ayurveda". And in honor of all the dear little ones, my inner child included, traveling this same road.

## Acknowledgements

This project has been very dear! The many precious tools of Ayurveda and postpartum care have served so much deliciousness and goodness on the plate of my friends, family, and myself. After untold hours editing, computer challenges, retyping lost data – it feels good to have this much done!

So many mothers and doulas have contributed, and patiently waited for this tool, we are publishing this version to meet the need. The need is always immediate - for the many mothers and babies right now, during their sacred window of the weeks right after their amazing journey bringing their babies across the veil into planet Earth.

So many have contributed to even this compact version of the postpartum mother and baby cookbook. Without the many wonderful recipes from Ayurvedic Doulas, teachers and students where would this be? Special appreciations have to be spoken for Aparna Khonalkar, Sonya Bastow for their recipes, and many other cooks and recipe testers unnamed here.

And special gratitude to my students Ulli Allmendinger and Juno Reis for midwifeing this version, so efficiently and kindly. There are other editors who have given so much, I thank them here and often – Bea Ferrigno and Emilah de Torro especially! You can see it keeps changing, and it is built on much wisdom and structural integrity you two have given not only the recipe work, but me personally.

And to my friends and family who for years have seen so little of me with all this related work.... You know I love you still, and all the more for your patience and blessings.



# CHOOSE COMFORT AND REJUVENATION

## Tips for the Cook – The Overview

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Lactation, emotions, hormones, digestive strength and rejuvenation thrives in any season on some unusual special care. Here are some of Ayurveda's valuable "secrets" to support balanced digestion for both mothers and babies. Please lean on them for at least six weeks postpartum or eight weeks after surgery and other physical or emotional challenges. It will have a long-lasting effect on the mother's and baby's as well as the family's health and well-being. Many of my teachers say "42 days for 42 years".

Regardless of the mother's individual body type, the principles and foods for postpartum cooking used here help balance the work of childbearing on the body after childbirth, whether from vaginal or surgical delivery. Following the principles of healthy cooking, doshic balance, and food combining will maximize your benefits, and are integral to our recipes and menus.

After the delivery of a baby, the digestive power is often diminished. A new mother's digestive system is very delicate yet her needs are great. Choice of foods and how well a mother digests her food has a great deal to do with the quality of her milk as well as her rejuvenation, strength, and comfort. It also helps to avoid postpartum depression and baby colic.

The following suggestions are time-tested, originating from the ancient system of natural health care called Ayurveda, yet found common to many cultures around the world. Please incorporate these foods and the qualities below, to create wise variations in your creative cooking and menu planning.

## Preferred Postpartum Foods

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Favor the sweet, sour and salty tastes to promote vata pacification. Ayurveda states that we do need all six tastes (sweet, sour, salty, pungent, bitter, astringent) in our main meals for balanced nutrition. Because the postpartum period for all mothers brings vata aggravation, mothers are advised to emphasize the sweet, sour and salty tastes.

**Use ample oiliness, moisture, warmth, and of course, love.** Unusually generous use of good fats, especially clarified butter (ghee) and sesame oil cannot be over-emphasized for hormones, emotions, lubrication, long burning energy and actually, cleansing - unless there are gall bladder/liver medical issues. Please ask your Ayurvedic postpartum care person about this.

Choose warm, soupy and nourishing foods that are gentle on the digestion. In addition focus on fresh ingredients as well as pure filtered water. Please avoid making enough for the next day. Leftovers unfortunately are guaranteed gas for both mother and baby.

Chose seasonings that support digestion, and milk production. These include ginger, black (not chili) pepper, roasted/sautéed garlic (avoid raw garlic), fenugreek, dill, cumin, saffron, and cardamom.

**Proteins.** Favor boiled warm milk (see our article about milk) or milk puddings without egg. Lassi, a yogurt or buttermilk drink thinned half with water and seasoned, sweet or savory, can be taken after 10 days; ricotta, cottage and other unfermented cheeses after 2-3 weeks. Rarely do tofu or fermented cheeses work. Most women and their babies have trouble digesting soy as well as hard cheeses.

A great and easily digestible source of protein is split hulled mung beans in thin soup as well as other lentils that are soaked overnight and well-cooked. Legumes combined with grains or (smaller amount of) nuts or seeds gives a complete amino acid complement.

Also recommended are almond or other nut milks or well soaked (24 - 48 hours) nuts and seeds as a snack. Soaked nuts can also be used in soups and sauces, as well as with vegetables or grains.

Chicken and fish soups can be added after about 4 weeks for non-vegetarians.

**Carbohydrates.** New mothers need extra carbohydrates, even if unable to breastfeed, for rebuilding. Favor Basmati or white rice (cook with an extra ½-1 cup water per cup of rice), oats, quinoa and amaranth, unleavened wheats such as couscous, pastas, chapattis or tortillas, yams, occasional barley, sprouted grain "Essene" breads, tapioca without the egg, and sweet/oiled winter squashes. Women who prior to delivery have been eating brown rice daily may be fine with it, but is rougher on tender bowels for most. Favor less refined, iron-rich sugars such as date sugar, Rapadura, dark Indian jaggery, molasses and some Mexican unrefined sugars. If using honey as a sweetener, please do not heat or cook with it.

**Fruits.** Choose iron-rich dried fruits such as dates, prunes, apricots and figs and remember to always eat them either soaked or stewed. Sweet, fresh fruits (not chilled) and freshly squeezed fruit juices are wonderful for their life force and gentle cleansing. Remember to eat fruits away from meals since most fruit ferments if not taken alone. Papaya is excellent, also aids digestion. Some do well after two weeks with fresh orange juice. Coconut milk is soothing and delicious in puddings, cream sauces and soups.

**Vegetables.** Asparagus, beet, carrot, fresh dill, fresh fennel, fresh fenugreek leaves, pumpkin, okra, avocado, artichoke, summer squashes, chayote are all good postpartum vegetables, cooked until tender and with additional seasoning and oil/butter to minimize gas. Some well-seasoned green beans or broccoli is fine if the mother is not of a thin body type. Peeled eggplant and kale, spinach, or chard may also be used after 2-3 weeks. Be sure to use oiliness, seasonings, salt, and lime or lemon juice with all the latter.

**Fats.** Use healthy fats and oils more abundantly than normal. This is important for postnatal hormonal and rejuvenation needs. It also assists lubrication and cleansing. Emphasize clarified butter (ghee), sesame and toasted sesame as well as some butter, olive oil and coconut oil which may be used more in warm weather if spiced appropriately.

**Seasonings.** During the first week postpartum, use extra ginger, garlic (roasted, not raw), black pepper, pippali, cardamom and clove. Fennel, fenugreek, basil, cumin, caraway as well as roasted garlic help lactation. Other useful spices include cardamom, cinnamon, ginger (fresh), turmeric, pinches of hing (asafetida), hingvastika, lime, orange or lemon juice and peel, nutmeg

(if the mother is not prone to constipation), paprika, and some mustard seed, cayenne, tamarind, marjoram, thyme, oregano, tarragon, licorice powder and ajwan.

## Minimize the following

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**Foods that have dry, cold, rough, heavy qualities, as well as fermented foods, and sharp pungent taste, as well as foods that are harder to digest.** They may for various reasons aggravate mother or infant digestion. Food-sourced ama or toxins take about 3 weeks to accumulate. They accumulate into colic, or slow mother's rejuvenation. Rushed or irritated atmosphere in cooking, serving, and eating notably also weakens digestion; hence mother and baby comfort is vital.

**Cold Foods and Drinks.** Ice cream, salads, chilled foods and drinks in general. We can help to cool hot-blooded or hot-flashing mothers if needed with fennel, coriander, cumin, a little mint, chamomile, or other food choices. We can also use essential oils, including hormonal balancers, especially those with good adrenaline and cortisol reducing properties.

**Dried foods .** They pull moisture from system to digest, like dried fruits, crackers, toast, even sweet and white potatoes, as well as grains such as millet, brown rice and corn. They are rough and drying and can be unsatisfying to fragile innards. Reduce drying, bitter, and astringent herbs, which may include chamomile, red zinger and raspberry leaf teas, as well as turmeric and sage (2 – 3 cups of strong sage or turmeric tea is used by midwives to dry up lactation so we minimize these). Legumes often cause gas and bloating anyway, more so after birth. They are dried, rough, astringent and hard to digest, If you use protein powders, be sure to add additional oil, sweetener, spices, and warm liquid, and hydrate well. Do not mix in fruit or soy, and avoid buying powders that contain a fruit-vegetable mix. Always remember to balance dryness with oil and moisture, and drawing on sweet, sour, and salty tastes.

**Heavy food. This** includes red meats, fermented cheeses, homogenized, pasteurized non-organic milk, sour cream, yogurt, eggs, fried foods, cold foods, and a lot of nuts. Minimize chicken or fish for 2-4 weeks.

**Milk or Half & half with sour, salty or astringent tastes.** Milk digests best boiled, as boiling simplifies protein molecules making it easier to break down. Milk or half & half can be used with unsalted grains, in puddings, with sweet taste, sometimes dates (acting different from other fruits), or warm with honey and ginger, cardamom, clove, and/or saffron-type baking spices. They should never be mixed with sour, salty and astringent tastes, so avoid milk with lunch or dinner.

**Tomatoes, peas, peppers, sprouts and salads.** All but tomatoes are hard to digest creating much gas for both mother and baby. Tomatoes tend to create rashes for babies as they are acidic, so – avoid them if possible. Be easy also on dark leafy greens the first two weeks unless the mother is craving them. Since the greens are so high in iron, magnesium and bone building minerals (especially the stems), you can use them but favor additions for balance: cook well with oiliness, salt, a generous amount of ginger (or roasted garlic or hing), fennel (or cumin or caraway or dill), and perhaps a squeeze of lime, which increases mineral absorption. Try adding some sweeter vegetable such as carrots or yams, or a pinch of raw sugar as well.

**Hydrogenated or cooked vegetable oils** (trans-fatty acids). These are a big no. Also, while mothers are nursing, don't follow a low-fat diet, for health, emotional, hormonal, mental and physical reasons, unless medically advised otherwise (e.g. liver damage, alcohol or gall bladder problems).

**Fermented Foods.** Avoid soy sauce, vinegar, pickles, tempeh, miso, most cheeses, and mushrooms. This also includes leftovers (cooked food left for longer than 6 hours). All give of their degenerative energy even those easy to digest. So all slow rejuvenation and often, clog digestion, and body channels. Make enough food for just lunch and dinner for the family.

**Cooking with Honey. Heating honey** is proven to create toxic accumulations over time in the body's channels, and around nerves. This also considered one of the most difficult toxins to remove. Raw honey or honey used in warm (not hot!) beverages is fine.

**Leavenings** .Yeast, baking powder and baking soda all are a strain on mother's and baby's digestion, and are best avoided. Leavened breads also provide ready food for disease organisms.

**Also, as most of us know, please avoid** coffee, sodas, chocolate, alcohol, garlic (dry, raw, or undercooked), onion, radish, chilies, and the cabbage family.

## Organizing Menu Planning by Weeks Postpartum

### Wise Menu Planning

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Consider this an approximate guideline, not rigid rules. All women's digestion after birth is initially weak, and needs support to bounce back quickly.

According to Rucha Kelkar, in her LOAJ article on "Ayurveda for Post-Natal Care" (Summer Issue 2006), "Postnatal care can be divided into three phases. The initial phase is the first ten days after giving birth. The second phase is up to forty-five days after childbirth, and the third phase until the appearance of menses." Other teachers speak of 3 sections about 15 days each, or as below.

As you can see, there are different schools of thought regarding those phases, coming from different teachers. I am merely sharing here what I have seen working well for clients. All the teachings give special emphasis to days 1-3, and 1-10.

### Foods to Favor the First 10 Days

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These first few days we are rekindling the digestive enzyme processes and bringing appetite back while giving gentle, nourishing, and simple foods. Digestion and elimination are especially fragile. Featured focus are hydration, oleation, heat and deepana spices for cleansing ama (toxins). Nourishing the dhatus (tissues)—especially rasa (lymph), rakta (blood) and mamsa (muscle) dhatus—rekindling agni (metabolism), pacifying vata and sattvic energy for rejuvenation are equally important.

#### **Proteins**

Boiled milk. boil with digestive spices such as saffron, turmeric, cardamom and fresh ginger. Sweeten, and add at least 1 tsp ghee per cup because this amount of ghee is gently laxative as well as especially nourishing during the postpartum period. Keep in mind that using less than 1 tsp ghee can cause constipation.

Hot almond milk with ghee, spices, and/or soaked dates.

Puddings, especially milk- or coconut milk-based rice pudding, using arrowroot or kudzu to thicken, and adding additional spices and ghee.

Sheero (Indian milk/semolina halva sweet, cooked well, and extra moist)

Well-ground almonds, blanched and roasted (max about 12 – 15/day)

Very mushy Khichadis are rejuvenative and provide grounding. This is a grain/bean combination, and you can use moist curried rice, tapioca or other grain with split hulled mung stew, and add veggies to your liking)

Thin, simpler soups with ample agni-supportive herbs that also reduce ama , dhal of split hulled mung (or red lentils) soaked preferably overnight or at least one hour before and cooked for one hour, with roasted garlic and/or other seasonings

#### **Grains and Energy Foods**

Spiced ghee with generous (equal portion) black pepper, ginger and clove, or if available, pippali, pippali root and chitrak instead of clove

First meals Konji (with spices, and generous serving of ghee and dark sugar)

Raab (cooked thick beverage with ground almond, semolina or rice flour, ghee, raw sugar or succanat, cardamom, water).

Hot extra moist (pudding like at first) steamed basmati with ample ghee (or coconut, sesame/roasted sesame for some special needs) and molasses, succanat, or the Indian or Mexican dark raw sugar, with generous spicing, like that.

Oats, cream of rice or wheat. Make sure those are cooked extra moist, and have no salt added the first 3 days or anytime you use milk.

Stewed fruits – especially iron-rich dried fruits such as apricots, figs and raisins with spices and ghee.

Can include stewed apples or pears if well cooked with clove and ginger.

Hot mulled (spiced) apple, apricot or other sweet juices.

## **Vegetables**

Garlic chutney

Begin ample use of freshly ghee browned garlic in soups, dahls and vegetable dishes

If you have a food dehydrator, dry the leafy greens and store. Make seasoned and oily sauces/soups with this and serve fresh greens later

Asparagus, okra, fresh fenugreek leaves, fresh dill as vegetable, carrot, beet, cooked lettuce/mild leafy greens (always cook with ghee, squeeze lime, and season well). Start with thinner vegetable soups or purees. Some added coconut milk is fine, too.

## **Menu planning, 10 days to 3 weeks**

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This period has a deeper focus on grounding, lactation and vata pacification as well as strengthening the digestive fire and balancing hormones. Emphasize sattvic foods for rejuvenation specifically of plasma, blood, muscle and fat tissues. Include the basics as listed above plus adding more stews, root vegetables, grains, and vegetable dishes. This also includes preparing for baby's growth spurts at 10 days, 3 weeks, (and 5 weeks) with extra rich, yummy, lactation-enhancing, nourishing snacks and foods, as well as extra rest.

## **Proteins**

Spiced boiled milk tonics for am and pm or as a snack as listed above.

Lassi or takram (thinned yoghurt drink with spices), taken midday, are good with lentil dishes for digestion. You may add 1 Tbs. of high-lignan flax oil for low EFAs (essential fatty acids).

Mung, red lentil or urad dahl; make not too thick, and season well (including garlic).

Avocado or thinned nut butters, added to sauces.

Tahini or other nut or seed "milks" (once lochia is lighter)

Almond milk-date shake (rejuvenative ojas drink)

Seasoned ricotta, cottage cheese (or flax oil-cheese recipes), or panir served over hot food.

For non-vegetarians, chicken or fish soup broths and soups such as the "Midwife's 24 hour- boiled chicken soup" are an option.

## **Expand Repertoire of Vegetables, Soups and Stews**

Subjis (vegetable dishes) that are oily, moist, and well-seasoned using vata-reducing vegetables  
Dark leafy greens (if craved) , sautéed with plenty ghee and spices such as ginger, garlic and cumin, as well as a squeeze of lime to aid absorption

Sauces from dried greens with yoghurt, water and seasonings, nut or seed butters, or coconut milk. You can thicken them using dhal flour, cornstarch, kudzu or arrowroot powders, over oven-baked or steamed vegetables.

## **Energy Grains/Snacks**

Denser yet still very moist and oily foods, such as a root vegetable or grain dish, well seasoned.

Moist casseroles.

Add more grain variety such as different types of rice, barley, oats, couscous, quinoa, amaranth and tapioca. Continue to use extra water.

Yams as well as some winter squashes.

Flatbreads like chapatti or tortillas. Start with ½ or 1 whole chapatti, well buttered with ghee, alongside some dhal or vegetable soup or as a tea snack with mother's guacamole or thinned nut butter.

Occasionally, rice, semolina or bean thread pastas (cook tender, beyond al dente)

### **Moist, Rich and Nourishing Sweets.**

Whipped cream and honey, with added rosewater, cardamom and /or vanilla

Some nuts, dates, raisins (soaked and well chewed)

Baked bananas with ghee, succanat, cardamom, ginger coconut and pinch of salt

Indian halvas

Mother's laddus with edible gum/or other gum acacia sweets

Mother's Halva (a legume/almond/grain/ghee sweet with added fenugreek powder)

### **Enzyme and antioxidant rich options**

Add fresh juice of lime over foods as desired, especially on green leafy vegetables to aid mineral absorption.

Fresh sweet fruit or small amounts freshly squeezed juice of such fruits;, e.g. grape, cherry, blueberry, mulberry, apricot, peach, kiwi; some do well with sweet orange, pineapple, apple, etc. Add a pinch of salt and fresh ginger, and serve at room temperature, not chilled. The citrus if tolerated may help slow bowels; kapha-pittas may do well with a little pomegranate.

Antioxidant juices such as Acai, Ningxia Red or Mangosteen as desired.

Avocado-fruit smoothie with citrus or berries and soaked dates perhaps, may give strength and more grounding comfort as a snack.

## **Menu Planning Weeks 3 – 6**

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If handling the above well, try slowly adding richer and more solid preparations.

Continue to focus on lactation, appetite and digestive fire. During this time period, the body is more able to attend to the three deepest tissues—asthi (bone), majja (marrow/nerve), and artava (reproductive)—as well as replenishing ojas. Of course, the rebuilding of all seven dhatus (tissues) continues.

### **Proteins**

Thicker dahls and khichadis

Other heavier in recipes made moist, seasoned, well cooked, pureed. In general, favor small legumes, such as mung dhal, red lentils, urad dhal, brown or French lentils.

Mother's special fenugreek leaf-yoghurt dish (Methi raita)

Middle Eastern Tahini Tarator sauce etc

Seed-cheese recipe adapted for postpartum conditions

Steamed mung paté

Home-made veggie cutlets, sautéed or steamed/baked. Avoid TVP (textured vegetable protein)

Fresh tofu on rare occasion, well seasoned and cooked, and only if it digests well

Pesto spinach lasagna recipe (has no tomato sauce) is possible.

Chicken or fish stews for non-vegetarians

Avoid protein powders but if you occasionally "must", then make sure to warm/hydrate them well with hot milk or nut milk, and add oil or ghee, as well as 1 tsp soaked fennel seeds, ginger and other

spices. Sweeten as desired but do not add fruits except soaked dates and avoid mixing milk with yogurt. Take between meals by 1.5 – 2 hours at least.

### **Carbohydrate and fat rich snack/sweets**

Indian postpartum dried fruit preparations

Generous rebuilding and ojas enhancing foods, such as dates, almonds, milk puddings etc.

Pastas (not al dente; minimize whole wheat)

Mother's shortbread, laddus, unleavened cookies

Saffron Cream cheese with flax oil and honey

Sprouted unleavened breads

Egg-less cheesecakes might be a nice transition - after 6 weeks - celebration food

### **Other sauces, dressings and gravies**

Continue with sattvic and non-aggravating to vata ingredients; there are many choices.

## **Menu planning after 6 – 8 weeks**

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Please take your body type, imbalances and the season into consideration plus, of course, your appetite and nursing needs.

Always make a gradual transition from one way of eating to the next level

While nursing the baby, keep purity in mind and avoid potentially aggravating foods such as constipating foods, cold heavy dairy, tomatoes, uncooked onion, chilies, chocolate, red meat. Many things still can cause discomforts.

Extend your period of postpartum foods if you have a vata body type or conditions such as winter weather, travel or moving.

If you have had surgery your postpartum window is a minimum of 8 weeks, not 6, and not just around foods of course. In addition to a soothing diet, remember that essential oils, flower essences, and energy work will also help.

If you have had major complications or loss of a baby, everyone should consider you will be very fragile for 3 - 6 months, so your needs extend longer than normal postpartum. Remember to keep your moisture and oiliness as well as seasonings ample, not adding too much dry foods, processed, leftover or in general harder to digest change at once. If you will be introducing miso, tempeh, fried foods, more complex desserts, tofu, fermented cheeses, breads, more complex sweets, and/or eggs or meats also take it gradually and pay attention to results.

Continue to favor enough good fats and healthy sweets, as well as the balanced freshly cooked hot meals and alkalizing well seasoned green and leafy vegetables. Cravings for ice cream, chocolate and stimulants will not be likely to trouble you much as a result.

For those transitioning into salad, consider fresh chutneys/cilantro or parsley salsas made with ginger, lime, salt and pinch of sugar instead of usual salads – or salsas. Include fresh ginger and mineral salt in carrot juice.

For egg, gently custard, soft yolk boil or "mother" and gently scramble. Avoid mixing egg with dairy milk, though adding coconut milk is very good.

For non-vegetarians, cook your meat well and tender with ample roasted garlic or other seasonings and do not serve with dairy or another protein.

## Shopping List

### Carbohydrates

- oats
- quinoa
- amaranth
- unrefined flours
- semolina flour
- unbleached or whole wheat flour
- basmati or white rice
- couscous
- (see which pasta)
- Essene bread
- tapioca
- cream of rice
- cream of wheat (farina)
- date sugar
- rapadura
- dark Indian jaggery
- molasses
- maple syrup

### Fats

- ghee (clarified butter)
- sesame oil
- toasted sesame oil
- cacao butter
- highest lignan flax oil
- coconut oil
- olive oil

### Seasonings

- anise
- fennel
- fenugreek
- basil
- bay leaves
- cilantro leaves
- cumin
- caraway
- caradamon
- clove
- cinnamon
- curry leaves
- tumeric
- hing (asafoetida)

- nutmeg
- paprika
- pippali
- mustard seed
- tamarind
- lemon peel
- licorice
- marjoram
- thyme
- oregano
- tarragon
- ajwan
- ginger
- black pepper
- garlic
- Italian herb seasoning
- vanilla

### Proteins

- adzuki beans
- milk
- fresh yogurt
- ricotta cheese
- cottage cheese
- split hulled mung beans
- lentils
- chicken or fish for soups
- paneer
- almond
- nut milks
- roasted tahini
- quinoa
- amaranth
- 

### Fruits

- dried iron rich fruits  
apricots, cherries,  
currants, dates,  
figs, prunes, raisins
- sweet fresh fruits
- sweet berries after 2 weeks
- papaya (not for pregnancy)
- coconut milk and water
- lime
- lemon
- apples, pears (to be cooked)
- tamarind

### Vegetables

- artichoke
- asparagus
- avocado
- beet
- carrot
- cilantro
- chayote
- chard
- eggplant
- fresh basil
- fresh dill
- fresh fennel
- fresh fenugreek leaves
- fresh methi
- occais. green beans
- kale
- okra
- parseley
- parsnip
- pumpkin
- spinach
- summer squashes
- swiss chard
- yams
- winter squashes

## HERBAL-FOOD SUPPORT BASICS

Ayurveda suggests leaning into the items below in your foods and teas, especially as you feel attracted to them. Play with them in your own way, as long as you follow the principles. You will find more recommended herbs in your foods to favor, and the shopping list.

### The power of culinary herbs

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Many kitchen herbs and spices are included in recipes and your shopping list for good reason. Most of them enhance our body's natural enzyme function, which needs to be supported in the first days and weeks after birth. So in many cases, what tastes delicious is at the same time health promoting. We just need to minimize certain effects: sharply spicy, astringent, and bitter. The last two cool, all three increase dryness, and bitter and strong spices especially are used for depletion therapies, which are not a wise focus now!

We need all six tastes for balance, and just choose carefully from all of them during this fragile and very significant window. It is common in western herbalism to advise herbs without understanding these things. We can bring in the sweet and gently warming effects, especially, to balance herbs like raspberry leaf, blessed thistle, nettle or even chamomile.

Many herbs such as basil, caraway, fennel, fenugreek and dill also support lactation. This list is not meant to represent all possible good herbal supports for you.

### Herbs in capsules

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These are particularly difficult for mothers in early postpartum. Just think what happens when a capsule gets wet before you take it....it sticks, sucking moisture. And what happens if that capsule gets dropped in a glass of water? The bolus of herbs, even after the capsule may have dissolved, tends to clump and be slow to hydrate or release its properties. Fenugreek is also particularly rough. Please hydrate your herbs and foods well before taking, and if you can, take them with something oily, too. If needed, choose pressed tablets over capsules.

### Special preparations

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Our teachers have shared some complex recipes for special postpartum daily use. Your AyurDoula can provide these for you, and some are included in this collection. Also, if you have special needs, please consult a qualified Ayurvedic Postpartum Practitioner for a properly personalized formula of rejuvenative, antidepressant, immune, or other supportive herbals. Ayurvedic herbology offers rejuvenative and lactation supportive herbal roots for a kind of nutrition and support the author has not found common in western herbology. They also tend to be tastier than Chinese formulary.

### Favorites among the favorites

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**BLANCHED ALMONDS** are a rejuvenative tonic and lactation supportive, containing nourishing calcium, proteins, and quality fats. Take with digestive baking spices such as cinnamon,

cardamom or clove. They are best also soaked overnight and/or blanched or gently roasted. Chew well or grind. 10 – 15 almonds a day is enough postpartum, considering the liver's work.

**BLACK SALT** is a strong digestive and carminative. It is often used with legumes and generally sprinkled onto food after it is cooked.

**WHITE SESAME SEED** is a nourishing, high calcium/protein/mineral food. Use after heavy lochia has slowed to avoid flow increase. Always roast in order to balance unusual enzyme inhibitors. The white seeds are less rough than the brown fibrous ones on fragile innards.

**LICORICE** harmonizes other herbs, boosts adrenal function and throat energy, soothes, cools, sweetens, and is a great demulcent. Avoid with high blood pressure

**CLOVE** gives strong digestive help. It initially heats, then cools, with antimicrobial aphrodisiac, anti-parasitic, anti-candida and extremely high antioxidant properties,.

**CARDAMOM** boosts prana, flavor, and helps balance emotions, respiratory function, and digestion.. Small amounts reduce pitta (and vata and kapha); larger amounts are sharply heating.

**COCONUT** is a creamy, soothing, nourishing, rebuilding, cooling, heavy and sweet alternative to dairy. Enjoy the young coconut water for summer heat and electrolyte balance, and coconut milk for sweet and savory sauces and puddings (use spices to counter the cooling effect).

**COCONUT OIL** is a cooling medium-chain fatty acid and stable cooking oil for no trans-fatty acid cooking. Season it well to balance for agni. Favor this oil for candida and herpes virus. It is mildly antiviral, antibacterial, and antifungal.

**CUMIN** is a flavorful, effective though gently digestive herb with a mild hormonal and cooling support.

**DASHMOOL** is a traditional ten-root formula recommended from Ayurvedic textbooks for 6 - 8 weeks use after birthing. It helps calm and rejuvenate the pelvic area. The postpartum decoction is 2 tsp of dashmool in 2 cups of water, reduced to ½ cup of water. Be aware that it burns easily that way. ¼ cup, warm is advised twice a day. Make fresh daily, best prepared by husband or doula.

**EDIBLE GUM, ALSO CALLED GOND OR GUM ACACIA**, is a resin supporting connective tissue rejuvenation. It requires special preparation. It is part of the Almond Herbal Rejuvenative Snack which is a breast rasayana (rejuvenative), from your AyurDoula.

**FENNEL** helps lactation and digestion, and is delicious with many foods. It reduces heat and acidity and is a gentle diuretic.

**FENUGREEK** supports lactation, rejuvenation, respiration, digestion, and may help the uterus release placental fragments when used in a stronger tea. Boil one teaspoon per cup for 3 to 5 minutes. Take 2 or 3 cups daily the first few days.

**FLAX OIL** is overused around high vata conditions. To balance, take it with ginger and honey, blended in lassi or nut milk. Later, blend with soft unfermented cheeses or nut butters for stronger hormone and anti-depression support. It gives much better digestion and EFA3 access this way rather than with other foods or in capsules. Use highest lignan oil that is semi-opaque when stirred. Found to support neo-natal brain development and to minimize or prevent either engorgement or undersupply of breast milk. Properly used it can be a beneficial phyto-estrogen.

**GARLIC, ROASTED** supports immune protection, digestion and circulatory systems. It is grounding, rejuvenative; aids heart function, cholesterol balance, and lactation.

**GHEE** – clarified butter, is rejuvenating, soothing, integrating, ignites agni, and is a carrier of nutrient-enhancing properties of foods and herbs warmed in it. It can be alkalizing by absorption of acidity. Ghee ushers wastes out of deep tissues into the channels for elimination. Like all good fats, it can give valuable lubrication and long-burning fuel that bypasses insulin pathways altogether.

Classically trained Ayurvedic Practitioners avoid butter in early postpartum due to the need to support the cleansing of natural toxins from pregnancy and birth from the body with a weak agni. Our mothers often favor butter over olive or coconut for hormonal and good cholesterol support.

**GINGER** offers warmth with excellent digestive and respiratory support. Fresh ginger is less sharply heating than dried powder.

**MILK** Un-homogenized organic cow milk, properly used, is considered one of the most rejuvenative foods. It is usually best taken boiled with chai-type spices (cinnamon, cardamom, ginger, anise or fennel, licorice, pepper, and nutmeg), added soaked saffron, one tsp ghee per cup, and sweetened to taste. Turmeric as well as honey helps cut phlegm (turmeric taken in smaller doses this way boosts immune system and is gently cleansing). Remember not to cook honey. You can add it once the milk has cooled down a little, or choose another natural sweetener. Enjoy a hot cup of milk with your breakfast cereal, as a snack and at bedtime for a calming, serotonin-rich and helpful antidepressant.

**NUTMEG** supports digestion, adrenals, zest for life, sleep, thyroid, and absorption. It is calming, grounding, tamasic, and notably anti-diarrhea or constipative. Use with caution during the first week postpartum or more.

**ROSE** has the highest vibration of all plants, is very spiritual, devotion promoting, and cooling, thus in all forms wonderful for high pitta and anger. Snack ideas include rose jam with ghee and cardamom over rice, thumbprint cookies or in a warm buttered flour tortilla.

**SAFFRON** can catalyze other herbals and support reproductive rejuvenation, liver, spleen, heart, and emotions. Use daily after childbirth, in milk, sweets or rice.

**SESAME OIL** is the default best for most mother and baby massage unless prone to rash. Second to ghee, it is also good for cooking, being gently warming, mildly astringent, antiseptic and antibacterial. In congestive conditions, sesame oil is preferred over ghee since it is gently warming and lighter for kapha types.

**SUGARS such as rapadura, dark jaggery, date and succanat**, notably are warming and mineral/iron rich. Jaggery should always be cooked 15 minutes to eliminate risk of insect contamination from processing plants. Raw light cane sugar (not bleached), turbinado and birch, honey (not to be cooked) or grain or fruit sugars may also be used. **Low glycemic sweeteners include** stevia, agave, xylitol, even some maple, date and black molasses. Favor these with blood sugar issues.

## BABY'S BEST DIGESTION

### Happy Tummies

Breast milk being of natural design, digests most easily and provides balanced nutrition. At the same time, various conditions in the environment and especially, what Mama is eating, can create doshic imbalances which give discomforts. Formulas often create difficulty digesting them. We of course want to work with creating comfort as quickly as possible, in addition to finding the root cause and correcting it. Ask your AyurDoula for help restoring balance, and in the meantime here is a checklist.

### Preventive support

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The following suggestions are in the wise-woman tradition order of simplest first. If a baby has colic, you may want to do everything right away, including massage, purchasing the herbs and oils and attending to the mother's influences. Colic takes three weeks or more to manifest with symptoms, after poor eating habits have accumulated. It may take a few days to significantly turn it around, but it will work. Colic which shows up immediately after birth usually stems from structural and emotional stress related to the birth.

#### **Burping**

Gently bouncing and nursing at an angle (feet down) help the air bubbles ingested to work their way back out most comfortably. Try gentle pats/rub first, in different positions like over your thighs or forearm as well as shoulder.

#### **Daily warm oil massage**

Infant massage has so many benefits! It helps prevent digestive and emotional problems. It also helps reverse colic and constipation. Cured sesame, sunflower or olive (more cooling) oils are usually excellent. It is best to avoid nut oils on babies.

#### **When Baby cries**

...and pulls legs tight to tummy, maybe twisting and arching too, it usually means discomfort in the tummy and gas, although arching may sometimes just be from needing to bend her spine the other way. If discomfort is occasional, try the following things in the order suggested.

Tummy massage: About 9 gentle circles right to left (clockwise). Cover with warm wash cloth for about 5 minutes or more.

Apply a warm cloth or baby hot water bottle (filled with warm, not hot, water), 10 – 15 minutes. Castor oil is especially effective with warm compresses. A drop of essential oil such as fennel can be added too.

Baby exercises will feel good to a gassy tummy and help expel gas. They can be done any time of day, but allow ½ hour after nursing, and be sure to loosen her diaper and coax gently.

After two weeks of age, allow at least two hours between feedings. This is to be sure fresh milk does not enter on top of sour milk and create digestive confusion, reflux, sleep issues and general hard to identify discomfort. During growth spurts, babies nurse more often and if you have cultivated the habit of baby eating till full and then digesting it, you are on the right track.

Babies get tired and often want help winding down at that point. Sucking is what they know best, and their mouth is a primary mode of calming. If you can rock, sing, wrap and hold closely, or give her your little finger to suck (upside down), she will sleep until she really needs to eat again instead of snacking so much on top of partly digested milk.

Fennel seed or dill seed tea is very helpful for relieving gas and intestinal cramping. This can be given directly to baby, and is more balanced than the cooling and astringent properties of chamomile, catnip or mint which are often advised.

Bring 1 teaspoon of seeds to boil in 1 cup water, steep and strain. A few drops may be all that is needed or a small bottle is fine if your baby wants more. Refrigerate extra for later in the day and make it fresh daily.

## Influences from Mother's side

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### **Breastfeeding Mothers**

Is your food being well digested? This will greatly affect both the quality of breast milk and rejuvenation. Many things will not show but can cause problems. You may want to consult an AyurDoula.

A newborn's system is immature. Soothing, appropriate nutrition for a nursing mom will help minimize difficulties for baby.

Are meals fresh, well cooked, delicious, satisfying, and taken in a pleasant environment? Honestly, these things can make the difference.

### **For All Mothers**

How are your emotions? Are you resting when Baby rests at least twice a day? Now is not the time to say yes to all. Talk with a friend, sort it out, ask for the help you need, in simple and practical terms. Hands-on help is top priority.

Could there be some aspect of family life, needs, routine or meal schedule bringing an upsetting influence?

Don't be afraid to ask your best girlfriend to organize friends to help with the load. Your husband needs support too.

Be sure also there is enough fluids and simple water intake. Try only warm water and weak fennel-fenugreek tea for a couple days and see what happens with your ability to cope.

## More helpful supports

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### **Essential oils for stronger and immediate support**

Grade A organic essential oils of fennel, dill, chamomile, basil, marjoram, nutmeg, ginger, or a blend such as "Ditone" can be diluted with about 3 drops vegetable oil and massaged into baby's tummy and/or feet. Avoid mints, they can sting and are very cooling. Some babies have

an extreme reaction to them. Have your diluting oil handy, and/or wipe. Never use water. Avoid getting oil on baby's hands – little hands go into little mouths and eyes quickly.

### **Constipation**

This is, according to Western experts, not considered a problem for breastfed babies even after several days. But babies, like adults, will get uncomfortable both physically and emotionally if more than a day goes by (or even less). Dip your little finger in some ghee or castor oil and let your baby suck it or rub small amount around your nipple. You can also gently rub some oil or ghee around baby's anus so she feels relaxed. Occasionally babies will need an oily finger gently inserted rectally to facilitate a first bowel movement due to tissues being not quite ready. Gently, never force!

### **For formula-fed babies**

Know that here as well we still apply the same principles of complete vs. incomplete digestion. Additionally, baby formula is not live, fresh food. This and other things make it harder to digest properly. New research findings from the Netherlands suggest that a hydrolyzed whey protein-based formula may help reduce colic over a standard cow's milk-based formula. "Colic is defined as excessive and inconsolable crying that lasts at least 3 hours a day for 3 days in one week, for a period of more than 3 weeks. The cause is unknown, but it tends to taper off after 4 – 5 months of age." That's too long! Other babies have done best on fortified (not plain) goat's milk, rice protein fortified rice milk, an un-homogenized cow's milk formula that includes digestive spicing. Please note that formula means other key things are added, too. Be aware of what else your baby is taking, and don't try to substitute these "home-mades" without a tested recipe. Formula should always be served warm.

### **About other herbal support for baby**

According to Ayurveda, herbs are best given to the mother so that their active principles emerge, made milder, in her milk, although sometimes a small naturally sweetened and breast-milk hydrated lick may be given to the baby. Breastfeed five minutes after the mother takes teas, according to herbalist Susan Weed, to get in Baby's system best. Suitable herbs are best personalized.

## Starting a Baby on Solids

Although classical texts of Ayurveda say that the ideal beginning is after the baby is exclusively fed on breast milk for one year, this is rarely seen today. Due to modern lifestyle and nutrition, alternate supports can be followed, whether for breast or bottle fed babies. At about 6 months a baby can be started on first foods, even about 4 ½ months with some (usually baby boys), who are really demanding it. It is best for their health and happiness to wait at least until he or she develops teeth, and then proceed gradually.

### Signs of readiness

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#### **First tooth, strong desire, 5-6 months of age**

The norm is first tooth, baby's strong desire for foods, and around 6 months of age. The tongue's ability to handle spoon-feeding is also key -- some babies can't do it so soon. Babies may be ready for other foods when they are inattentive during feeding, nurse for only a minute or two, or actually refuse to nurse.

Baby will be pulling on the table mats before she really wants to eat, so take your time. He or she has plenty of time, too. You can devote extra time to nurturing her in other ways, through attention, play, music, cuddling, singing, walking, or whatever your joint love and creativity comes up with!

## BABY'S FIRST FOODS

### Begin digestible and liquidy, one at a time

These really can't be called solids at first. During your first week of introducing new foods, it is wise not to plan on suddenly feeding your baby enough to sleep all night, at least if you are honoring this major transition for your baby and see it as an opportunity to wake up her other digestive abilities at a natural pace.

For example, try first the broth from rice, barley, mung beans or red lentils. Please don't start with bananas or sweet potatoes. Thick foods will constipate, and sweet foods will often pre-dispose to avoiding vegetables.

### Basic Recipes

1. Give your baby the strained broth for about a week.
2. Then begin the liquid from the second food.
3. About the third week, start offering the well-mashed parts, cooked longer.
4. Over 2-3 weeks, progress to semi-solids.
5. Start incorporating a well-cooked mashed vegetable. Choose vegetables your child likes and start with the list of foods on your postpartum list. Many children don't like the broccoli/cabbage family anyway.
6. Over time, work up to 3 regular meals. Offer them first and nurse at least ½ hour apart from things other than cereals, or for snack, to start and end the day.
7. If baby is constipated from these early offerings, be sure they are dilute enough, and add a little ghee.

8. If gassy or refusing repeatedly due to taste, or after about 3 weeks, it is time to add some of the gentle seasonings the baby was accustomed to receiving through your milk, such as salt, ghee, turmeric, and cumin.
9. As you are creating new routines over the following weeks and months, remember that a baby, like us, will enjoy and have nutritional need for variety of foods that are fresh cooked and of high quality.

**Rice Broth: Use** 10 - 15 parts water and 1 part organic basmati rice. Bring to a boil, simmer 1-3 hours. Strain and give Baby the thin broth at first, while warm. As baby gets a little older, you can add a pinch of salt and ghee (clarified butter), feed him the puree, and then make it thicker.

You can also use your recipes for rice (horchata) and barley (cebada) "milks".

**Mung Broth:** 8 parts water and 1 part well rinsed split and hulled mung (whole will take much longer and give rough particles, not smoothness. If needed, soak overnight and rinse well before cooking, at least one hour or in pressure cooker. To remove enzyme inhibitors, soak the split mung at least one hour and rinse, also skimming off any foam while cooking.

After cooking, strain and give the broth. After a few weeks, begin adding pinches of turmeric, salt, ghee, and some other "safe" spices you have been using in your early postpartum like cumin, turmeric, coriander and fresh ginger.

See other notes in the recipes section about cooking legumes.

## First Tastes

It is better not to insist babies or young children eat foods they do not like. However, if they are started on sweet taste, they will not easily take the other nutrition they need. Again, don't start with bananas, apples or yams. Unless ill, babies usually have normal, balanced instincts and bodies, which have more needs and often different needs than you will be able to fully know. It is fine to have healthy treats from time to time, but limit the highly concentrated ones and avoid chocolate. Remember how many other foods, such as rice and milk, are also in the sweet taste category.

### **Include all six tastes**

After about 3 weeks you may start introducing gentle seasonings. Babies are used to all six tastes through breast milk but a baby's diet should be blander than an adult's. Go easy especially on strong salty, sour and highly spiced foods.

### **Avoid Sour Tasting Foods**

Baby doesn't need grapefruit, strawberries, yoghurt or fermented cheeses now.

## Dairy

### **Cheese and yoghurt**

These are best avoided as they easily increase phlegm, pitta (heat), and constipation. They also easily lead to earaches, colds, or fluid in the ears, as does cold and un-boiled milk. Phlegm-increasing foods also build tissue and bone, and children have lots of building and growing to do, so they will crave dairy and sweet taste in its many forms. When you get ready

to start cheese (maybe after one year or more), use fresh cheeses like ricotta, cottage cheese or home-made panir. Be sure it is gently warm, and mix in a little digestive seasonings for less phlegm.

### **About Milk**

Properly used, which is rarely in America, milk is a wonderful food. Improperly used, it is a major troublemaker even recognized as such by the American Academy of Pediatrics. You may want to start with goat milk because it is less mucous-producing (or kapha aggravating), or with cow's milk for a very thin vata baby. Be sure it is un-homogenized—you can add cream back in as appropriate to skim milk if you cannot find non-homogenized milk. Please also refer to the Ayurvedic cow's milk Formula in your recipes section, for general tips and a very tasty recipe. Always boil milk first—this breaks up protein into smaller molecules, so it is easier to digest, and it also protects the baby from microbial contaminants. Remember that breast milk is always served warm, so serve your milk warm as well.

## Heavy Foods

### **Bananas**

These are hard to digest in addition to being too sweet, and should come later.

### **Meat, fish, or eggs**

It is best to wait about one year minimum, before giving these foods.

### **Be aware of early signs of constipation**

You can increase good heavy quality and at the same time soften the bowel with oiliness, in addition to fresh or stewed fruits, vegetables and fluids in your Baby's diet (as well as yours). Crackers, dried cereal snacks, and toast are often culprits. It is not difficult to avoid enemas, drugstore laxatives and suppositories by avoiding dry rough foods.

### **Leftover, canned and frozen**

Remember the value of freshly cooked foods over canned or bottled for easy digestion, and plan on eating as a family whenever you can. Before long, the baby will be eating much of what you eat.

## Chokeables

Avoid things like nuts, salads, grapes, raisins, etc. Softly cooked pieces of vegetable are fine when baby is old enough to handle them.

## Beginning Weaning

The basic wisdom for the weaning process is "Don't offer, don't refuse." If a mother is feeling depleted or strained it is important to call on Ayurvedic principles and herbal foods as well as therapies for deep tonic, rejuvenating support and any needed help with lactation.

### **Pregnant and nursing**

Pregnant mothers secrete extra waste products into breast milk. They should then want to discontinue nursing. They also need their strength.

### **After the first year of life**

After one year, babies are said to need other building blocks for nutrition. Nursing does become more of an emotional nourishment and attachment, and not so much a nutritional consideration. Weaning after one year becomes more of an emotional pull, so mother-initiated weaning is best done gradually.

### **Before 18 months**

The natural process might be wisely completed by 12-18 months, per some Ayurvedic physicians, yet others suggest to nurse as long as the mother is strong. Two or three years is often natural.

## **RECIPES**

### **CARBOHYDRATE ENERGY**

According to Dr. Vasant Lad, "Wheat is the meat for vata vegetarians". If wheat is tolerated, it can be more grounding and satisfying than rice at times. Spelt or Kamut sometimes substitutes. It is in general true that grains and root vegetables give grounding with minerals needed for building strong structures, in addition to the fuel for energy from carbohydrates. Choose a grain, or a starch (potato, tapioca, yam), instead of both in the same meal to avoid digestive confusion.

### **Sorting gluten and fiber**

Current nutritional discussions say generally people have more allergic response to the outer fiber on wheat than to the inner portions. Which means whole wheat may not be as good for many as preciously thought.

Many have problems with the separate issue of gluten, which means rice and quinoa may be better choices than oats, wheat, rye, or barley for those with potential or diagnosed gluten intolerance.

Fiber-rich grain coatings and dry fiber supplements are likely to scrape and dehydrate mother's fragile colon wall after birth. Whole grains, home-ground into cereal are much more satisfying than store-bought versions, and may suit you well in this form. Generally, mothers prefer the flavor and texture of cream of basmati or white rice, or cream of wheat without the bran in the early postpartum days. It is not so rough as the whole grain. Hence our recipes are usually for white basmati rather than brown rice, or unbleached instead of whole wheat flour.

### **Grains**

Include ghee or sesame oil or other fats on your list. Using a coffee mill you can grind small amounts of grains easily, and not have to hunt at the store or pay for packaging.

### **Quinoa**

Quinoa flakes are very quick cooking without grinding further, and, like oatmeal, offer good milk-production support. Whole quinoa is done in 15 minutes.

### **Brown rice**

Allow at least 15 minutes cooking time for freshly ground cereal otherwise it will cause constipation or gas. Brown rice warms, it is rougher and not as sweet but it has nuttier taste. Season and add milk or nuts, oil or ghee and sweeten. It combines well with amaranth if cooked whole, both needing at least 45 minutes.

### **Cooking steel-cut oats**

Like brown rice, steel-cut oats normally take 45 minutes to cook. Soak overnight in cool water, then rinse and cook 25 - 30 minutes.. Steel-cut oats are neither flaked nor quick cooking, but have great flavor and texture when properly cooked. Seasoning (such as anise seeds, cardamom, cinnamon, ginger) and toasting both help cut the slippery texture from gluten in oats.

### **Liquids**

Grains can be cooked with water or some added whole, un-homogenized cow's milk (or rice, coconut or nut milks). Remember to avoid using salt when cooking with cow's milk since they don't combine well. A rare few may do well with warm soy milk on occasion. Soy is energetically cold, drying and astringent, i.e. vata-increasing, gas-producing, and harder to digest for most.

### **Seasonings**

For variety, use culinary spices such as ginger, cardamom, cinnamon, clove, or nutmeg (if there's no constipation), anise, fennel, fenugreek, turmeric, coriander, clove, or go with savory tastes if you prefer. A little turmeric or saffron may be used in either case for health, color and flavor.

### **Sweeteners**

Add dates if desired, but minimize combining cereals with other fruits for best digestion. Use fruits separately at another time for nourishing snacks. Favor iron-rich sweeteners, and keep in mind that iron is better absorbed without the calcium-rich dairy.

### **Other condiments**

Enjoy porridge with milks or creams, ghee to taste, toasted or soaked nuts, seeds, or almond herbal foods and sweetener of choice and other fine tunings according to season, climate and body type. Some mothers do very well with savory flavors instead of sweet, perhaps adding vegetables for a breakfast. In this case, avoid the dairy milk combination and use some salt and ginger, garlic or other herbs, serving with optional lassi, nuts, or seeds.

## First Days' Rice Pudding

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The ingredients for this recipe, which originates from Nepal, can be found in any American kitchen. In addition, it is wheat and gluten free, and dairy free except for ghee. The preparation is very easy though cooking time is several hours. It is served after birth as desired. Different schools have their variations on first foods, but they all are very moist, oily, steaming hot and rich in spices that rekindle digestive fires closed down to give energy to birthing. Ayurveda also favors the immediately accessible energy postpartum - good healthy sweets, and iron for blood-building support. Please also note that Dr. Shrestha also avoids salt the first few days after a client's birthing, so this dish, called a pasayam in Nepal and a konji in other places, is cooked without salt. (In Nepal, Konji is a fermented dish; this is not.)

**Put on to cook during labor (or in a crock) and serve throughout the day, even up to 5 times daily the first few days after birth, if desired. Make fresh daily.**

**Prep Time: 10 min.**

**Cooking Time: 4 hours**

**Serves 4**

16 c	pure water
1 c	basmati rice
2 c	dark, iron-rich sugar (sukkanat, Rapadura, molasses or dark jaggery)
½ c or 2-3 T	ghee per serving (or (toasted) sesame oil)
2 t	ginger powder
2/3 t	cinnamon powder
½ t	clove powder
½ t	black pepper or long pepper/pippali (best!)
1/3 t	loose not packed saffron (or 2/3 tsp turmeric)
½ t	anise seed or cardamom powder

1. Bring water to a boil in large heavy-bottomed pot. Avoid aluminum or Teflon.
2. Pour water over rice and stir, rinse and repeat about two more times, to remove any powders or enzyme inhibitors. Add to the water and boil, reduce heat to simmering without a lid, stirring occasionally for several hours.
3. When beginning to thicken, add the sugar and all the spice powders. Add 1/2 of the ghee. Continue to cook slowly and stir as needed.
4. When consistency is gelatinous, serve steaming hot, with added ghee (another Tbs or more). Keep hot and serve as desired through the day, with as much of the dark iron-rich sweetener and ghee as desired and a cup of hot boiled milk.

Recipe from Sarita Shrestha, OBGyn, BAMS (Ayurvedic Physician).

## Mother's Porridge

During the first 10 days or until desired differently, cereals should be more moist, even soupy or gelatinous. Leave the usual 1:3 postpartum grain-water ratio for later. The preparation for this porridge is easy and it usually takes only 5 to 10 minutes. A pregnancy-wise staple, this is an essential for postpartum moms.

**Prep Time: 5 min.**

**Cooking Time: 5-10 min.**

**Serves 1**

1/4 c	cream of wheat, cream of rice or regular oatmeal
1-1 1/2 c	water or milk (no salt if using milk)
pinches	seasonings as desired (such as cinnamon, cardamom, nutmeg)
1 t or more	ghee, sesame or olive oil
1 T	mineral-rich sweetener and/or 2-3 dates

1. Whisk cereal into heating liquid and continue stirring as it comes to boil until you are sure it is not lumping while it thickens. Turn down heat and continue cooking for 5 -10 minutes, depending upon the grind or grain.
2. Serve with sweetener and at least one teaspoon of ghee, unsalted butter or oil such as sesame or olive (at least a tablespoon the first few days).

## Mother's Porridge Variety

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For most mothers, these are good variety grains, or combine as desired. Some say barley and quinoa as well as oats help milk production. Quinoa is for lighter fare unless well dressed, yet offers, like amaranth, a higher complete protein profile than other grains. We have not listed corn, because it is so vata increasing. Nor buckwheat and millet, which are drier and more astringent also. If you crave them, balance with creamy, sweet, oily effects and favor in porridge rather than as a grain side.

**Prep Time: 5 min.**

**Cooking Time: 5-10 min.**

**Serves 1**

1/4 c	barley, kamut or quinoa flakes, or ground brown rice
1-1 1/2 c	water or milk (no salt if using milk)
pinches	seasonings as desired
1 t	or often more of ghee, sesame or olive oil
±1 T	mineral-rich sweetener and/or 2-3 dates

1. Whisk cereal into heating liquid and continue stirring as it comes to boil until you are sure it is not lumping while it thickens. Turn down heat and continue cooking for 5 -10 minutes, depending upon the grind or grain.
2. Serve with sweetener and at least one teaspoon of ghee, unsalted butter, or oil such as sesame or olive.

## Amaranth Cereal

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Amaranth offers complete protein for a breakfast that stays with you longer than regular porridge. It has a mucilaginous texture that balances its slight rough astringency and nourishes our intestinal flora. Favor when craved, or after 8-10 days. Like teff, amaranth is a very small seed but takes 45 minutes to cook well. A crock pot works best with these.

**Prep Time: 5 min.                      Cooking Time: 45 -90 min.**  
**Serves 1-2**

1 c                      amaranth seeds  
3 c                      water  
3 T                      ghee, oil or white cacao butter  
2 t                      fennel seeds  
1/3 t                      clove or 1/2 t ginger

1. Bring water to boil in a saucepan, and add fennel seeds (whisk to avoid boiling over). If using a crock pot, add amaranth and fennel seeds to crockpot, then pour hot water over them.
2. Reduce heat and gently cook, covered, about 45 minutes on the stove or 1.5 hours in a crock pot, adding clove or ginger powders the last 10 minutes.
3. Enjoy topped with ghee or oil, sweetened to taste, added optional nut milk, or savory flavors, oiliness and salt. Many of us enjoy it cooked with another grain such as brown rice, to which the amaranth gives a more demulcent texture.

## Toasted Ginger Oatmeal

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Toasting, plus the ginger and other additions make oatmeal less mucous forming. Added almond butter and hemp milk increase protein, especially nice for those avoiding dairy. With clarified butter or other oil, it gives more lasting energy for the morning. Dates give iron, lower glycemic sweetness and digest more compatibly with cereals than other dried fruits (less fermentation). All give delicious variety in taste! Note that steel-cut oats (rather than rolled varieties) give best flavor but take 30-45 minutes cooking time.

**Prep Time: 5 min.                      Cooking Time: 10-15 min. (45 min. for steel-cut oats)**  
**Serves 2-3**

1 c                      organic rolled oats (not quick cooking variety)  
3-4 c                      water or use 1/2 milk for extra nourishment  
1 T                      clarified butter (ghee) or pumpkin seed oil  
1/2 t                      ginger powder, or 1 T fresh grated ginger  
2 T                      almond or other nut butter  
1/2 t                      salt (avoid with dairy milk)  
1/3 c                      vanilla hemp milk  
1/3 t                      cinnamon powder (optional)  
3-4                      medjool dates, chopped, or 1/3 cup dry date bits, or iron-rich sweetener to taste

1. Gently dry roast the oats in heavy pan or the oven until lightly browned. You may add the ghee while toasting.
2. Add water, ginger and dates (and optional salt), stirring briskly and bringing back to boil. Cover and reduce heat to low for about 10-15 minutes.
3. Stir in almond butter, optional sweetener (do not cook honey), and your choice of "milk" to complement and cool to eating temperature.

### **Comments and Tips**

You can enjoy alongside a savory breakfast dish when appetite is strong but make sure you're not using dairy milk.

Those with loose bowels will want to make it thicker, and/or serve a chapatti or toast, too.

Those prone to constipation should use 4 cups of water or more at first.

## **Basic Mothers' Rice**

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Basic rice for postpartum moms is not your usual rice recipe. Just as simple to make, but about 1/3 more water! Some of us still do it this way. Among the white rices, basmati, Texmati and Jasmine rice are more flavorful and nourishing, with some of the germ intact. Serve after childbirth or after bowels have begun to move (before that, favor the more soft and well-oiled konjis and puddings).

**Prep Time: 5 min.      Cooking Time: 15-20 min. (25 min in rice cooker)**

**Serves 4-6**

3 c	pure water
1 c	basmati or other good white rice
1 T	ghee
pinch	salt
	optional variations

1. Bring water to boil in heavy-bottomed pot.
2. Wash rice well with your hands, and check for stones or other impurities. This is best done in a bowl where you can swish the rice well for several rinsings.
3. Add rice to boiling water with ghee and salt. Reduce heat when it returns to a boil and simmer gently covered for 15 minutes.
4. Serve very steamy hot with extra ghee for Mom.

### **Comments and Tips**

Cooking rice with some ghee or butter (or sesame or coconut oil if appropriate/desired), gives a special texture and flavor when served.

It is said the rinse water contains enzyme inhibitors, even if organic, (just like beans but milder), so discard after rinsing. This gets in the way of good digestion and absorption. If the rice is not organic, such as purchased at Indian stores, sometimes unfortunately there has been talc or other dust added for weight, which makes rinsing especially important.

Note there is one variety of basmati on the market, which requires less water. It should be labeled on the bag or bin as such - adjust down accordingly in this case or you will have mush-which could be turned into a pudding or stock, of course!

Note that we are not using brown rice on purpose. It is rougher on tender innards during the postpartum days, in addition to being high in arginine as well as too heating (pitta increasing) if there is a viral

outbreak. If you eat it every day anyway it may be fine; just cook with extra water also for at least 45 minutes.

Cooking rice with extra water will make it more plump and easily digested, less likely to bind in the lower digestive tract. Pregnant moms who have high vata-or anyone who is easily dehydrated or living in dry climate-will probably enjoy this. Basmati rice turns out especially plump and tasty.

## Poor Woman's Gold

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How about some extra color, subtle flavor and nutrition on the plate? Chinese cooks are especially big on having at least 3 for appetizing and resulting digestive value alone. But did you know that all your kitchen spices also have medicinal virtues? This variation on the Basic Mother's Rice can be made after one or two weeks.

**Prep Time: 5 min.**

**Cooking Time: 20 min.**

**Serves 4-6**

1 recipe, Basic Mother's Rice  
2/3 t turmeric powder (more or less to taste)  
4-6 small wedges fresh lemon for garnish and taste (optional)

1. Follow preparation instructions for Basic Mother's Rice.
2. Add turmeric to the cooking water or even the last 5 minutes, fluffing gently with a fork. Serve with optional citrus.

### Comments and Tips

Turmeric of course is cheaper than saffron. And Ayurveda recognizes it as an herb of tremendous medicine for skin, immune system and liver cleansing support as well. Dr. Mishra claims a good Indian won't eat a meal without turmeric, unless it is in honor of a relative who needs to be released to pass over, in their last two weeks of life. Both turmeric and saffron have a wonderful tonic effect on liver, spleen, female reproductive and small bowel, in addition to making the rice less phlegm producing!

If you have available some American Saffron, it can be used. It takes much more quantity than good Spanish saffron, but offers both color, and good medicine for the small intestinal lining.

If milk supply is at risk, or around growth spurt days (10 days, 3 weeks, and 5 weeks) you can minimize turmeric or just use saffron or a little curry powder. This is just to be cautious since turmeric in large quantities is used like sage to dry up milk. In small quantities it is not a problem, and supports!

See also, the Upma recipe in Vegetables.

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## Quinoa

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Quinoa (keen-wah) was first cultivated in about 3,000 BC in South American high plains of the Andes. There in the Quechua Indian language, quinoa means "mother." to them it is central to their culture, called the "mother grain." Grown now in Colorado and other states, it is hand picked with tiny round seeds. Not cheap, but it expands up to 4 times its dry volume. ALSO, quinoa encourages milk production, and has high quality protein for amino acid balance.

**Prep Time: 5 min.**

**Cooking Time: 15-20 min.**

**Serves 4-6**

1 cup quinoa  
3 cups + water, or delicious with part coconut milk

1. Soak quinoa for at least 5 or 10 minutes. (This author does it for 30 so it swells enough to use my strainer to rinse it well, without losing the little seeds.)
2. Delicious pan roasted - baked to dry first for nutty flavor. I keep a jar this way. You can also gently stir fry the washed grains in ghee or sesame oil to dry and toast them with seasonings before adding to water.
3. Bring water to boil and add quinoa. Season optionally with hing, salt, pepper, rosemary or garlic, and coconut.
4. Lower heat and steam with a lid on for 15 minutes.

### Comments and Tips

Important to know, freshly harvested quinoa is thickly coated with bitter, soap-like substances called saponins; these compounds protect the seed from predators before harvest. Most are removed before market, but traces are best soaked for 5 minutes or more then rinsed well. (The quinoa flakes seem to have been well cleaned already.)

Quinoa expands a lot when cooked. 1 cup expands from dry to 4 or 5 cups cooked, very light and fluffy, easy to digest.

Quinoa is not really considered a grain. It is also gluten free and used often in cookies, cereals, soups and desserts. Without gluten, something has to be added to keep things together.

Choose quinoa or amaranth often for anyone at risk for herpes or shingles. The amino acid levels of lysine are double other grains, it is also high in histadine, has no arginine (which feeds the viral growth), no tryptophan, good on the other amino acids.

Lovely option for variety in food choices, adding to rice or other grains, or served alone, plain or seasoned for a lighter meal/grain - for pregnancy or postpartum.

Recipe from Wild Oats Community Markets and Ysha Oakes

## Unleavened Breads

Once you get the hang of making a batch, chapatti or tortilla are quick and easy to prepare (much quicker than yeasted breads), and really delicious. A daily staple in many cultures called tortillas, chapattis, roti and other things, flat breads are fine as long as the bowels are moving well, generally 1-2 times daily before adding these for postpartum mothers. In general, you can add these after 7-10 days.

## Herbed Chapatti

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Some friends will think your cook is so skilled and exotic, though these are still very simple. Play with the herbs for color balance on the plate too! Enjoy after about 10 days.

**Prep Time: 15 min.**

**Cooking Time: 15 -20 min**

**Serves 4**

1 c	whole wheat flour
1 c	unbleached flour (or 2 c semolina/chapatti or atta flour)
¾ t	salt
3-4 T	ghee
¾ c	hot water (not boiling)
1 pinch	turmeric for golden color (optional)
1 t	toasted cumin seeds, so tasty (optional)
1 handful	chopped cilantro or spinach for green or toss in your fennel and fenugreek seeds from your tea (more optionals)

1. Put dry ingredients in a bowl;. Add ghee, using your hands to mix well until crumbly. Gradually dribble water in while you mix. When it forms a smooth ball you have enough water.
2. On a lightly floured surface, knead dough for 10 min. Smear with ghee and set in a warm place such as the sun for about half an hour.
3. Make small balls and roll them out into a pancake shape. Moderately heat the frying pan or griddle until water sputters and cook first chapatti in the pan dry. Cook about 20 sec and add a thin film of ghee or sesame oil. Cook until it puffs up, flip, and again until golden (about 2 min). Press with spatula to encourage the inner steaming which creates light/puffy chapattis, and use minimum ghee.
4. Stack, brushing each one with a little ghee or sesame oil (a paper towel or spoon works fine) and cover to keep warm while you cook the others.
5. Refrigerate extra dough to easily make more later; keeps 3 days or so.

### Comments and Tips

For heavier body types (kapha constitutions), congestion (kapha aggravation), and spring weather (kapha season), use sesame oil in dough and cooking. Add ginger or cumin powder, as well as pinches turmeric.

For parathas, prepare same except after rolling out, brush with melted ghee, fold, ghee again, fold into triangle, and roll out. Fry not too hot, in more ghee. They will puff up. These are rich and yummy, good for Pitta and Vata for special occasions. Parathas can also be stuffed with a cooked and seasoned vegetable blend, and served after 4-5 weeks or more.

For puris, make smaller balls, perfect circles, deep-fry in ghee (to prevent trans fats from oils). These should puff up quickly. Serve hot, after 5 or 6 weeks for celebration.

This is a great alternative to toast. In general, toast is quite dry so it tends to cause constipation after birth, or if eaten under-toasted easily builds yeast. These flatbread recipes have no leavening agent—somehow our carbohydrate enzymes work better this way. However, too much chapatti can act like other breads of course.

Start by enjoying 1/2 chapatti alongside some soup, maybe moist rice too if your appetite is up like it should be, then see how it handles with your "transit time" and tummy comforts.

## Cilantro Chapattis with Avocado Filling

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My dear friend Mata Prema taught me this easy and delicious chapatti variation. Tovia inspired the combination herein with her growing postpartum appetite and wise palette. They are quick and easy when you keep chapatti dough and ripe avocados on hand. Best served 10 days or more postpartum.

**Prep Time: 30 min.**

**Cooking Time: 15-20 min.**

**Serves 4**

- 1 recipe Basic Chapatti
- 1 t toasted cumin seed
- 1 handful or more minced fresh cilantro
- ghee to cook
- 1 recipe Guacamole in 5 or Gourmet Guacamole

1. Prepare Basic Chapatti recipe and add some toasted cumin seeds (or powder) and finely chopped fresh cilantro while kneading. Cover and set aside for at least 1/2 hour in a warmer place in the kitchen, while preparing the guacamole.
2. When ready to roll out, use a little flour to keep chapattis from sticking to board and follow same instructions to cook as in basic chapatti recipe.
3. Keep chapattis warm on a plate with a lid on the stove, perhaps over another warm/hot pan or in the oven. Serve topped with guacamole, alone as a snack or alongside soup for a more substantial meal

## STARCHES

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Potatoes, yams, tapioca and a few other complex carbohydrate foods have a different enzyme process than grains, and are best taken separately as a result. Sweet Potatoes aren't the same thing as Yams either. They have a lighter yellow skin and color inside, and, due to their dry, astringent mealiness are not as good choices after childbirth. They are not as sweet usually as yams, and tend to have a vata disruptive influence, according to Dr. Lad. The same concern is observed regarding white, red and yellow potatoes, so we lean away from them for a few weeks.

### Yummy Yams!

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Yams are nourishing not just for good long burning carbohydrates and vitamin A. They are said to offer some stabilizing progesterone-like hormonal support. For preparation ease they can't be beat. Here are some simple preparation options.

1. Bake like a potato, coat with butter or ghee or cover in a little water and prick. I do 350 degrees for 45 minutes, usually. In a hurry? 400 degrees for ½ hour works too. Done when fork tender.
2. Mashed - use ample ghee or other oil.
3. Yams are delicious just sliced down the middle and drizzled with dark roasted sesame oil, and perhaps a tamarind dhal or some Tarator sauce over veggies for a meal with instant satisfaction.
4. Chop and sauté or steam yams with your other vegetables sometimes. The sweetness balances out astringent green things for full-bodied pleasure as well as color!
5. Visualize this beautiful option on your plate: beets, dark leafy greens and yam, with a lime tahini, roasted garlic and dill sauce, sprinkled with coconut or coconut milk. Add a wedge of lemon or lime, for such an appetizing meal!
6. Your Christmas candied yam recipe may taste better now than any other time. But leave out the marshmallows and consider a more appropriate source of white creaminess, like cashew sauce or coconut milk perhaps?

#### **Comments and Tips**

Yams come in variations from golden to garnet colored. Shop for the healthiest feel and look.

Yams do wonderfully with many of the same seasonings as beets, such as your choice of ginger, fennel, anise, clove, cinnamon, orange peel or juice, nutmeg, pepper, salt, cayenne, coriander powder or cilantro, mint (minced leaves, just barely cooked, give nice color contrast). Roasted garlic, rosemary, thyme, basil...the list goes on. Have fun!

Explore chunks simply rubbed with ghee, thyme, salt and pepper, baked in the oven. The cooking time will vary with size of your chunks. Carrots take longer, as do beets, so if doing a medley, cut smaller pieces for the later.

## BEVERAGES THAT REBUILD

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These are also energy or protein-rich beverages; with important soothing and rejuvenating qualities.

### Raab - Soothing and Dairy Free Comfort Food

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This thick, spoon-able beverage is a nourishing morning snack or accompaniment to hot cereal. Favored among some Indian families for the first few days and weeks especially, this is dairy free except for ghee and you may substitute sesame oil. It is thick, rich and unctuous as is needed at this time, with some sweetness, complex carbohydrate, fats and protein for immediate as well as lasting energy. Serve 1-2 cups daily after childbirth as desired.

**Prep. Time: 5 min.**  
**Serves 3**

**Cooking Time: 5 min.**

3-4 c	pure water
3 T	jaggery, Mexican dark sugar, or succanat
1/4 c	semolina flour
3 T	ghee
1/2 t	dried ginger powder
2-3 pinches	cardamom powder
2 pinches	nutmeg or pippali
3 T	ground almonds

1. Put jaggery and water in a saucepan and bring to boil to make a thin syrup, or prepare any of the above dark brown sugars in this way.
2. In a medium-size sauce pan with heavier bottom, warm ghee and add flour. In enough ghee to cook but not brown the flour, cook on medium-low heat, stirring for 1-3 minutes. Add ginger powder.
3. Taking pan off the heat, hold firmly and whisk with the other hand in between adding water, a little at a time. Add the other spices.
4. When water is added, include the sugar and cook until thickened, just a few minutes. Serve hot. Toss in almonds just before serving with sprinkle reserved for the top.

#### **Comments and Tips**

The dark raw sugar is not just to make this taste good, it is part of the nourishment. Use more as desired, or less if it still tastes good.

Recipe from Mata Prema Rathod

### Cow's milk

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This is interesting - please read before you say "I can't/don't drink milk". According to Ayurvedic medical texts, cow's milk, properly taken, is the most rejuvenative food on the planet! Hot milk is a wonderfully soothing and rejuvenative tonic for pregnant and postpartum moms and others wishing to rebuild their tissues and healthy serotonin levels. Excellent in the AM, for a snack, and or bedtime it supports smooth sound sleep. Cow's milk is surprisingly very rejuvenative after childbirth, and the best first dairy to use,

properly used, and for most women we see. There are those who still cannot handle it well, notably with genetic cultural history where milk was not used.

Many people fear cow's milk, and rightly so. However, reactions such as upset tummy, gas, phlegm and allergy which are common with homogenized, cold, unboiled and/or non-organic milk or cream, BVGH enriched, from unhappy un-pastured cows, and without the digestive enzyme enhancing support from the spices, are rare when properly used and prepared. For more explanation and correct use of milk, please see [www.sacredwindow.com](http://www.sacredwindow.com), and refer to the articles pages or ask an Ayurvedic practitioner.

## Hot Spiced Milk Tonic

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This recipe has been shared with happy clients for years. It was first published on our AyurDoula flier by Laurel Rew, my partner in the AyurDoula work, when we were called "Mountain Doulas". This is a basic chai spice without the black tea, and "mothered" for postpartum conditions. Using whole spices, or for quick and easy, 4-6 teabags of spice tea will do it. You can serve this after birth as desired and also mid to late pregnancy. Feel free to experiment with the recipe to meet your desired taste.

**Prep Time: 10 min.**  
**Serves 4**

**Cooking Time: 20 min.**

2 c	water
1 t	fresh ginger, or 1/3 t dried ginger
1.5	sticks cinnamon
5	whole cloves
7	whole black peppercorns (optional)
1 t	cardamom seeds, no skins (if using powder, use 1/4 t at the end of cooking)
2	pinches nutmeg
1 liter	cream top whole milk (or 3 1/3 c skim milk and 2/3 c full cream)
2 T	clarified butter (ghee) or unsalted butter (for early weeks after birth)
2 T	suitable sweetener (below) or to taste (optional)
1/4 t	anise (optional)
1/24 t	fenugreek (optional)
1/2 t	turmeric (optional)
2 t	fennel (optional)
8	threads of saffron (optional), as desired

1. Boil water with spices until it is reduced to 1 c or less
2. Soak saffron about 10 minutes in small bowl of hot milk or water before adding at the end.
3. Add milk and cream, and bring back to a boil. Yes, let the milk begin to rise along the sides of the pot. Be ready to remove from heat right away, it is tricky! Ideally, milk is brought to a boil 3 times like this to make it most digestible.

### Comments and Tips

It is optional to add any of these herbs that you have: 1/4 t licorice root powder, 1t shatavari herb powder; 1 t ashwagandha herb powder. Shatavari and ashwagandha are wonderful Ayurvedic rejuvenatives and strongly support lactation. They are best used after 8-10 days and encouraged before any growth spurt (10 days, 3 weeks, 5 weeks etc). After childbirth especially, these are not taken alone, rather with digestive spices.

For sweeteners, choose most suitable to you. Remember however to avoid iron-rich darker sugars here since iron and calcium don't absorb well together, and darker sugars can curdle the milk unless added

after cooking. Diabetics would favor stevia, agave, or xylitol. Pittas would favor lighter sugars or maple syrup perhaps in hot weather; though postpartum they too have vata imbalances. Kaphas will do well with honey, agave, or stevia, and Vatas with some honey. Remember to add honey only once milk has cooled down, and please avoid any artificial sweeteners, including Splenda. The latter all have been shown to have toxic influences.

For hot weather just use the cooling spices cardamom, rosewater, and vanilla if you like. Early pregnancy pitta is high, so use minimum spicing and serve cooler.

Recipe from Laurel Rew, RN; Tovia Safford, Herbalist; Ysha Oakes, AyurDoula

## Ayurvedic Cow's Milk Formula

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Of course, if possible, your best solution to none or not enough breast milk is another healthy nursing mother's milk, perhaps even from a milk bank, but this is not always possible. For infants adopted or otherwise without access, this formula-created by a female MD and Ayurvedic Practitioner as an alternative close to the composition of breast milk. Variations below are also helpful during weaning.

**Prep Time: 5-10 min**

**Cooking Time: 15 min**

**Serves: varies**

2 c non-homogenized cream-top organic whole milk  
2 c distilled water  
1/8 t turmeric  
1/8 t cardamom  
1/2 T fennel seed  
1 thin slice fresh ginger  
1/8 - 1/4 c succanat (you need much less for older babies)

1. Bring all ingredients except succanat to a boil. Let boiling milk climb the pot and lift it off heat to fall then put back on heat and repeat 3 times. This makes much smaller, easier to digest protein molecules.
2. Add succanat and immediately turn heat off.
3. Cover to steep and let cool, strain, and refrigerate extra. Serve warm, like breast milk is served.

### Comments and Tips

Make smaller batches of this more often for freshness and best digestion.

The un-homogenized (cream-top) whole milk is important. If not available, purchase organic skim milk and organic cream and add the two together, 2/3 to 1 c cream per quart depending on Baby's weight and shape.

Refined or supermarket brown sugar is not wise for babies! Succanat was chosen not only for sweetness, but also for the gentler blood sugar effect which complex sugars have. It is also important for iron and other minerals.

Watch for baby's comfort with this recipe-it won't work for all babies certainly. But if you started out with strong doubts about cows milk being ever of value, please first study the Ayurvedic influences on your own breast milk quality, and when and why different kinds of dairy may or may not be good.

As the baby gets older and is clearly fine digesting this, gradually adjust to more milk, less water and much less succanat. This recipe is also likely a helpful alternative during weaning. Remember to always serve it warm!

This recipe is also a great way to introduce milk back into your life if you have been unsure about milk digestion also. Turmeric, with its antihistamine effects, helps here too. If you are an advocate of raw milk only, we can say it is true, the natural composition is more full of life force and enzymes, fresh from the cow warm, if the cow and milking is tested clean. But keep in mind that the composition of other mammalian milk is still out of balance for human babies and needs adjusting. Given delayed or no access to raw milk sources, we find that Ayurvedic preparation is a healthier option.

## Almond Drink to Increase Vitality

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Substitute dairy with rice or almond milk if lactose intolerant. Ghee may be considered lactose free and according to Dr. Vasant Lad, vegans should consider ghee vegan! According to our experience in any case, ghee is a very special postpartum food. Serve after childbirth as desired; this is wonderful with cereal or at bedtime. (And enjoy revitalizing sleep!)

**Prep Time: 10 min**                      **Cooking Time: 10 min**  
**Serves: 2**

20                      raw almonds, soaked overnight  
1 c                      boiled hot water  
2 c                      organic cow milk (unhomogenized if possible, full cream)  
2 tsp                      ghee  
1/16 tsp                      saffron  
1/8 tsp                      ground cardamom  
2 tsp                      sweetener such as date sugar (high iron options preferred)

1. In the morning, drain off the almond soaking water.
2. Pour boiling hot water and soak just until cooled down enough to handle. Rub the skins off the almonds before they stick again, and rinse clear.
3. Bring the milk to a boil three times (sliding off/on the burner).
4. Add almonds and hot milk to the blender with ghee, saffron, cardamom and sweetener.
5. Blend until smooth.

Recipe adapted from Heidi Nordland, Ayurvedic Practitioner and AyurDoula

## Energizing Date and Almond Shake

---

This is surprisingly creamy! It can be served starting right after birth or as desired.

**Prep Time: 10 min (plus overnight soaking)**    **Cook time – to boil water**  
**Serves: 2 - 3**

10                      medium dates, pitted and soaked  
1 tsp                      soaked fennel seeds  
25                      soaked whole raw almonds  
2-3 c                      warm water for the "milk" plus a cup boiling hot for blanching  
2                      pinches cardamom  
2                      pinches saffron (optional)

1. Soak the pitted dates and almonds with optional fennel seeds overnight in separate bowls.
2. In the morning, drain and peel almonds. Pour some some boiling hot water over almonds to blanch and then peel them easily (slip skins while the water is still hot or they stick again).
3. Blend with 3 cups fresh warm water and all other ingredients for 2 minutes or until smooth.

**Comments and Tips**

Ayurvedic Vaidya Dr. Dharmendra Dube offers this variation: Soak a tsp of fennel seeds per serving with whole seeds from 2-3 cardamom pods and the dates (and almonds separately). Blend the next morning and take this every am, for breakfast or part of, no matter what else one is eating (that's not just postpartum!).

The added cardamom is yummy and really helps us handle the almond digestion and prevent water retention.

Thin vata mothers should vary by using only 2 pinches of fennel, and adding pinches of ginger and or black pepper for agni.

Recipe adapted from Dr. Vasant Lad

## Nut and Seed Milks, Dairy Free

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Cashew milk, almond milk, hazelnut milk, brazil nut with figs, tahini milk- all are calcium and protein rich as well as soothing. Serve nut milks after birth as desired (tahini milk after 10 days).

**Prep Time: 5 min.**

**Serves: 3-4**

1/2 c	nut butter (approx 2 T ground per 1 cup water)
1 quart	hot water, total
1-2 t	lecithin (optional) for added smoothness and nourishment
2 T	sweetener to taste, or several medjool dates
1 T	ghee or sesame oil (or up to 1 T per c), when served warm
2 T	lignan rich flax seed (optional) ground or soaked
pinches	ginger and cardamom (optional)

1. Put nut butter or soaked nuts in about a quart blender of hot water. Blend. A bit of lecithin will smooth it out more, since it emulsifies fats, but is not at all necessary. Add maple syrup or other sweetener to taste, and optionally other condiments as in the hot milk tonic. Or make it savory with a bit of salt or Braggs and roasted cumin powder.
2. Serve warmed or room temperature, keep extra refrigerated and use within about 2 days.

### Comments and Tips

For beneficial combination of EFA3 - electron rich lipid with the sulphur-bearing protein (from nuts) include the high lignan flax.

Soaking removes the enzyme inhibitors on seeds and nuts, as well as encouraging a sprouting process in some, so the heaviness of nuts, generally a problem postpartum, will not be an issue. According to Dr. Shrestha, tahini should be roasted to avoid toxins.

Use soaked almonds (always peel), cashews, sunflower seeds, or other nuts as desired. They are not a complete protein however, so be sure there is protein complementarity balance in the form of legumes (from split mung dahl usually works best) served the same day.

1/2 - 1 t of lecithin will make your nut milks much creamier - it emulsifies fats and water, while adding nourishment especially for brain tissue, among other virtues.

Sesame (tahini) milk increases apana vata. It is especially high in calcium, protein, and other minerals, and along with the other nut milks a nice alternative for times when dairy needs are to be avoided (allergy, congestion, heaviness).

Grain-based milks are nourishing carbohydrates, but without nuts or soy are not a protein source to speak of. Soy milk is hard on almost all postpartum moms. If she does well usually with it, cook with spices and ghee, sweeten to taste and see how it sits now. Dairy-free options are a benefit most throughout pregnancy, yet many find after the 8th month and postpartum adding dairy is valuable.

## Simple Tahini Milk

---

This is a quick easy snack that's super yummy and nutritious. Serve after 7-10 days.

**Prep Time: 5 min.**

**Serves: 2**

3 T	tahini (roasted, not raw)
2 -3 c	boiled water
1/8 tsp	cinnamon
2 pinches	cardamom
1/2 t	maple syrup, or to taste

Puree all ingredients in blender and drink warm, right away.

Recipe from Tovia Safford and Ysha Oakes, Postpartum AyurDoulas

## Horchata de Arroz (Rice Milk) por Mama!

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This is a cooked adaptation of Horchata de Arroz-a popular Mexican beverage. While most horchata recipes seem vata increasing since they do not heat/cook the rice puree, our version is cooked and made more suitable for postpartum needs through added ghee/oil. Raw horchatas, often served at Mexican restaurants, are not for postpartum mothers. Serve this cooked version after childbirth as desired.

**Prep Time: 15 min.**

**Cooking Time: 5 min.**

**Serves 3-4**

1/3 c	basmati or brown basmati rice
3 c	boiling water
1/2	stick cinnamon
1 - 2	whole cloves
2 pinches	salt
4 t	ghee, sesame or sunflower oil
1/2 t	vanilla
to taste	raw or dark brown sugar or dark agave (or use light organic sugar for light color)
pinch	grated nutmeg (optional)

1. Soak rice, cinnamon stick and cloves in 1 cup water overnight. Drain and rinse.
2. Combine rice, boiling water and cinnamon in a blender for 2-3 minutes, until smooth.
3. Strain if desired (a good blender will get all but a few cinnamon remnants).
4. Add your rice milk to a 1 1/2 quart saucepan, and bring gently to boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. If it starts to lump, immediately remove from heat and whisk well. When boiled, it is thickening and done.
5. Add salt, vanilla, ghee or oil, sugar to taste and optional nutmeg. Serve hot with an extra teaspoon ghee.

### Comments and Tips

To serve thicker, use more rice. It will be a gelatinous soothing thick beverage like the RAAB recipe, nice with some ground almonds or other nuts, or a suitable starter first food for babies (made with less spice).

Grain-based milks may give some energy, but make sure to balance in other ways for fats and/or missing amino acid balance. Mother and baby need more nourishment and help making the carbohydrates roll over into more lasting energy, gained in this case with help of some extra ghee/oil along with cooking and spice.

## Pumpkin or Sunflower Seed Horchata

---

This is a satisfying, protein-rich and suitable raw-food horchata. Serve after about 2 weeks as desired, made with hot water.

**Prep Time: 5 min. (plus soaking overnight)**

**Serves 2-3**

2/3 cup	sunflower or pumpkin seeds
1	stick cinnamon or 2/3 tsp cinnamon powder
3	cups water
2 t	raw blue agave, dark raw sugar or dark brown sugar to taste

1. Soak seeds in water overnight. Drain and rinse well.
2. Puree seeds, cinnamon, and water in blender for 2-3 minutes until smooth as possible. Strain only if desired into a fine meshed strainer. Add 1/2 cup water for the unstrained version. The pulp is delicious and protein rich, but the "milk" is also rich and satisfying strained.
3. Sweeten to taste if desired but taste first. I find that it is not really necessary with the pumpkin seeds.

## Cebada (Barley "Milk")

---

This is a Central American recipe, adapted to postpartum needs. A toasted barley water recipe coming in Baby's chapter in the larger version cookbook can be used as a first food option. For light, more cleansing snack, beverage, or, without sweetness, use for soup stock. The Chinese give barley water to babies to help protect them from colds as barley has some subtle rough, astringent property. Serve after birth as desired with this understanding, perhaps in the sweet, oily and spiced version here.

**Prep Time: 5 min**

**Serves: 2**

**Cooking Time: 5 min.**

**Quick and Easy, Dairy Free**

2 1/2 c	water
1/2	stick cinnamon
1/3 t	dry ginger
2 -3 T	barley flour (light toasted is tastier!)
1 T	urad, chick pea or mung flour (optional)
1-2 T	natural sugar
1-2 T	ghee, sesame or sunflower oil
1/8 t	salt or to taste

### 3 pitted dates (optional)

1. Put water, salt, cinnamon and ginger in a saucepan to boil.
2. Meanwhile, mix the barley flour and oil or ghee to a smooth paste with a little of the not yet boiling water. Gradually add more water whisking until smooth and liquid.
3. Slowly add the barley liquid to the boiling water and vigorously mix it in with a whisk or it will lump a lot! Return to a boil, whisking constantly. Remove from heat. Pour through a fine meshed strainer. Serve sweetened and hot.

#### Comments and Tips

For the first 2 weeks postpartum or as desired, use an extra tablespoon or more flour, extra ghee, sweetener, and extra spice. To make more, note that 4T is 1/3 c. 6-7 T is 1/2 c by my measuring cups and better for postpartum tastes!

For additional protein, you may add 1 T urad or mung flour for each 2 T of grain flour. Alternatively, you can use milk instead of water and drop the salt.

Cebada is also delicious with 2 or 3 pitted and chopped dates cooked in when you are almost done.

Make fresh daily. Substitute fine oat, semolina, amaranth, quinoa or rice flour as you wish for their varying benefits. Barley is more cleansing, quinoa lighter and amaranth heaviest of the lot. Oat has more gluten, nourishing for many and not the best for others.

Barley's nutritional content is comparable in some ways to wheat. There are a few differences, however.

Barley contains twice as many fatty acids as wheat which accounts for a 10% higher calorie count. And as great as wheat's fiber content is, barley contains about 17 % fiber, which is 40% more than wheat, making it also rougher, lighter, less satisfying, though more cleansing. It also contains Vitamin E (wheat contains none), 68% more thiamin, 250% more riboflavin and 38% more lysine, giving barley a more balanced protein.

Despite all these Western nutritional contents of barley, Ayurveda says it is more astringent and even a little drying (from all the fiber) than wheat, making it more suitable for a Kapha rather than a vata constitution/ imbalance. However, the fiber and fatty acids and Vitamin E also give barley its demulcent properties when well hydrated.

Recipe from [www.waltonfeed.com](http://www.waltonfeed.com), with postpartum variations.

## Simple Digestive Lassi

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Several lassi recipes can be enjoyed for breakfast, lunch, or daytime snack postpartum. Made with fresh plain yogurt, kefir, or real buttermilk, this savory version is also called takram or buttermilk. Lassi is fresh yogurt, real buttermilk, or kefir blended with water and seasonings. It is wonderful support even for malabsorption, using real buttermilk in the savory options, and taken midday with lentil based dishes (pulses). Avoid at night, with ice, and perhaps the first week or 10 days postpartum, and avoid mixed with fruit or ice.

**Prep Time: 2 min.**

**Serves 1**

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 2 T       | live-culture, unsweetened yogurt (best fresh home-made) |
| 1 c       | pure room temperature or warm water                     |
| 1 t       | ground cumin or toasted seeds                           |
| 1 pinch   | salt or black salt (optional)                           |
| 2 pinches | ginger, clove or pepper (optional)                      |

Blend or whisk well and drink slowly. Blending for 2 minutes increases the agni in the drink, making it even more effective.

### **Comments and Tips**

Although yogurt is rather heavy and clogging for newly delivered mothers, lassi is different. If desired in the mid-day meals, is particularly wonderful taken with pulses (mung soup/dahl/kitchari). And yogurt is always best by far served fresh the same day - it becomes a much more congestive food taken after that. Making at home is very easy!

Kefir offers the best probiotic balance among the three choices of cultured milk. True fresh buttermilk is considered the best choice for daily fare for ANYONE with malabsorption, but it is not so easy to acquire.

This is an especially refreshing warm weather drink and digestive aid to sip with your meal, benefiting all three doshas in the body. More water in the summer is more appropriate to balance the sour/heating influence also, along with rosewater or orange blossom water and a lighter sugar or maple syrup.

Lassi can help eliminate gas, especially the savory versions. The more sour your culture, the less sattvic or rejuvenative it will be.

Recipe from Terra Raphael, Clinical Ayurvedic Practitioner and Licensed Midwife

## **Sweet Lassi and Sweet Flaxed Lassi**

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Sweeten with honey and even use warm water, if you are a vata constitution or very sensitive, leaving out the rosewater. Simply delicious with spices only if your yoghurt is fresh. Serve 5-10 days after childbirth, when serving legume dishes midday or breakfast instead of milk.

**Prep Time: 5 min.**

**Serves 1-2**

1 - 2 c	water
1/2 c	fresh live-cultured unsweetened yogurt
1 - 2 t	turbinado sugar, honey, or other sweetener (or to taste)
1/8 t	cardamom (or to taste)
2 pinches	ginger
1 pinch	nutmeg (optional)
1/4 t	rosewater or to taste (optional)
1 T	pitted dates (optional)
1 T	lignan-rich flax oil (optional)

Blend all ingredients well, for 2 minutes for increased agni and digestibility. No ice please!

### **Comments and Tips**

The optional high-lignan flax oil (e.g. Barlean's brand) makes this not only creamier and delicious but a particularly nutritious food combination for best absorption and use of the essential fatty acid oil.

A teaspoon of lecithin adds brain nutrition and makes the preparation creamy and smoother.

Recipe from Aparna Khanolkar, Ayurvedic Chef and Postpartum Postpartum AyurDoula

## Pumpkin Chai

---

Joseph's recipe was inspired by Ysha's horchata - It is a nourishing rasayana for colder temperatures as well as postpartum. Ghee permeates all tissues. Almonds build ojas. Spices make the heavy ingredients easier to digest. And pumpkin gives alkalizing carbohydrates for grounding, richer snack. Please only use freshly cooked that day pumpkin puree. You can use some of your pumpkin with other vegetables for satisfying nourishment too.

**Prep Time: 5 min.**

**Cooking Time: 1 hour**

**Serves: 2-3**

1 c	almond milk
2 c	pumpkin
2 T	ghee
4 T	sugar
2 pinches	salt
½ t	cinnamon
½ t	dried ginger
¼ t	nutmeg
¼ t	cloves

1. To puree whole pumpkins, bake at 350 F for 1 hour. Baking makes the skin peel easily. Peel, then cut into squares, scoop out flesh and mix with milk (and a little water if necessary) and blend.
2. Make a paste with the spices, add to the pumpkin mix, and continue blending. Bring to a boil in a saucepan and serve warm.

Recipe from Joseph Immel's wonderful website, [www.joyfulbelly.com](http://www.joyfulbelly.com).

## VEGETARIAN MAIN DISHES

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### Asparagus Khichadi

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Barley, oat, and various other grains (even tapioca) are protecting, nourishing choices for variety if gluten is not a problem. Occasional use of the red or French lentils is also ok. Serve the rice-mung kitchadi after birth or as desired.

**Prep Time: 10 min**

**Cooking Time: 45 min.**

**Serves: 3-4**

1 c	basmati rice
1/2 c	split yellow mung beans
5-8 c	pure water
1/2 lb	fresh asparagus (or zucchini, okra, carrot)
3 T	clarified butter or ghee
1 t	yellow (or brown) mustard seeds
1/2 t	cumin powder
1-2	cloves freshly minced garlic (optional)
pinch	asafoetida powder (hing)
1/2 t	turmeric powder
1/3 c	chopped cilantro (optional)

garnish with optional grated coconut, sea salt, fresh lemon for asparagus, or lime

1. Clean the rice and dahl separately. It is easier that way to see and remove any debris or stones.
2. Rinse two or three times in cool water, until the water runs clear.
3. Add water to a medium sized, heavier bottom soup pan and bring to a boil. Allow rice and dahl to simmer about 35 - 40 minutes while you prepare the spices and any desired vegetable.
4. Wash and prep your vegetables into smaller bite sized pieces.
4. When your rice-mung mix has cooked for about 30 minutes or more, heat a heavy skillet over a medium flame and add the ghee. Add mustard seeds to the hot pan, then cumin shortly thereafter with minced garlic. Within a few seconds mustard seeds will start to pop. When garlic is beginning to turn golden, add the asafoetida (or cumin if using powder).
5. Add asparagus or other vegetable and saute briefly to sear and protect color. Add turmeric powder to warm with any other easier burning spices like nutmeg, clove, cinnamon, leafy herbs, cardamom and cayenne, just before you pour the oil, spices and vegetables directly into the boiling rice and dahl mixture. Cook until vegetables are tender.
6. Reserve a teaspoon or so of cilantro per serving; add the rest to your pot just before removing heat source and cover. Serve with favored optional condiments, such as sea salt, cilantro, coconut, and a squeeze of lime.

#### **Comments and Tips**

Dr. Smita Naram uses 3 c water only, and 1 T ghee, which makes a dry khichadi great for kapha people but not postpartum. We have adjusted the water for the first few days postpartum  
Turmeric will stain yellow!

Asafoetida smells awful but it doesn't taste except slightly like onion, which gives a grounding flavor in cooked dishes. It is used when cooking any legumes to reduce the gas, as are garlic, ginger, cumin, mustard, coriander, clove, pepper, salt, and many other seasonings.

Recipe from Dr. Smita Naram, Amrita Veda, adapted for postpartum with extra ghee, moisture, and the vegetables.

## Aparna's New Mother's Dahl

---

Serve as soon as desired, as a thin, strongly spiced soup and not a thick dahl, which is good for help when digestive fire is weak.

**Prep Time: 10-15 min.                      Cooking Time: 45-60 min.**  
**Serves 2**

¼-1/3 c	moong dahl, soaked for at least 30 min.
3 c	pure water
1-2 T	ghee, coconut or sesame oil
2/3-1 t	cumin seeds
2	cloves fresh garlic, minced
1 t	fenugreek seeds
2 T	finely chopped cilantro
¼ - 3/4 t	black pepper
1/4 t	turmeric
1/3 t	salt
2 pinches	cayenne (added last few minutes)
2	small lime or lemon wedges (or 1 t tamarind paste)
1/4 t	fresh grated ginger

1. Clean mung for stones, rinse well and soak if possible for at least 30 min..
2. Bring water to boil and add mung. Skim foam and toss. Simmer for about 30 - 40 minutes.
3. Warm oil or ghee in small heavy skillet and add cumin seeds and garlic. When beginning to brown, add fenugreek seeds and stir just until they are quickly toasted (they brown quickly).
4. Add most of the cilantro, stir to sizzle and add pepper and turmeric. Stir a little of the broth into the pan to rinse it into the soup. Add salt, and tamarind (if using) to blend well.
5. Serve with optional lime if not using tamarind.

### Comments and Tips

If you have it and want a color change, add a teaspoon or two of tamarind paste – this gives a gentle sweet-sour undercurrent and dark rich color to any of your soups. Or roast 1-2 TBS flour in ghee or oil until browned, stirring in with spinach. But bear in mind that tamarind and spinach are high in oxalic acid - reduced by cooking and some of the seasonings, still to be watched for the first days after birth, and in general, for those sensitive in the kidneys.

Pitta moms, or any constitution during pitta season, as well as those not early postpartum will find the pepper a bit much (unless kapha constitution). Ginger, freshly grated, is a good substitute-use 1 t - 1 T instead. We can use a little sweetness, more lime and a splash of coconut milk if it is already too spicy.

If fresh fenugreek leaves (methi) are available to you, this is wonderful. Use the tops and leaves of one small bunch. Add the leaves after stir frying the spices (use a little extra cumin, and some mustard

seed instead of the fenugreek seed) and allow it to cook for about 5 minutes before adding to the well cooked dahl. Include a few pinches of sugar to your soup.  
After your 6-week window, and if the baby is doing well with your addition of other foods, one small Roma tomato, chopped finely, is nice color and flavor, added to the spices after about 45 seconds, sautéed briefly.

Recipe from Aparna Khanolkar, Ayurvedic chef and Postpartum AyurDoula - *A Mother's Blessing*

## Spinach Mung Dahl

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Spinach is astringent enough, so we left out the standard turmeric, and you will notice it tastes much better with that hint of raw sugar even so. This is a nice time to serve a yellow rice recipe for color balance in the meal (and to still gain the tremendous health benefits of turmeric). After the first 10 days postpartum, when lochia is reduced and the craving for iron building greens is distinct, this is a hit.

**Prep Time: 10-15 min.                      Cooking Time: 45-60 min.**

**Serves 4**

5 c	pure water
2/3 c	mung beans, split and hulled
1 small bunch	spinach, chopped
2 T	ghee, olive or sesame oils
1 - 2 T	carrot, finely chopped or grated (option for color nutrition)
1 T	fennel seed
1 T	fresh ginger, grated and/or fresh minced garlic
2 t	dried basil
1 1/2 t	coriander powder
1 t	lime wedges or tamarind paste
2/3 t	cumin
1/2 t	raw sugar
1/4 t each	hing and fenugreek powders
1/8 t each/or	cardamom and nutmeg powders
	salt and pepper or paprika to taste
OR	
2 t	Vata Churna or curry powder (QUICK AND EASY alternative to above listed spices)

1. Boil water. Add cleaned and washed (soaked if possible) mung and low boil for 30 – 40 minutes.
2. Saute cumin, optional garlic, carrot, and hing in a little ghee.
3. Add coriander, fennel seed, and fenugreek seed if you have it, adding on low heat just seconds before you add the spinach, fresh ginger. Stir a few times and add cardamom or nutmeg, and basil. Set aside and toss this mix into soup the last 5 - 10 minutes of cooking.
4. Add salt, sugar and paprika or pepper before serving.
5. Beautiful pureed and served with lime wedge.

### Comments and Tips

When you cook fennel seeds, toasting them gives a very different flavor, more like toasted licorice. It is very nice in this recipe. Or so are the sweet, moist, plump un- or under-roasted fennel seeds, which give more sweetness.

For hot weather and pitta moms, pregnant or otherwise, substitute cilantro or even fenugreek leaves, and use lime option.

## Saffron Coconut Stew

---

This one has rated 5 stars with everyone! Serve after 5-7 days postpartum, alongside some basmati rice and optional greens.

**Prep Time: 15 min.**

**Cooking Time: 30 (red lentils) - 60 min. (split mung)**

**Serves 4**

2 - 3 c	mixed chopped vegetables such as asparagus, carrots, okra, fresh fennel or fresh dill, fenugreek leaves, green beans, winter squash
1 c	red lentil or split mung
6 c	pure water
1-2	pieces seaweed
2 T	ghee, sesame or coconut oil
2	cloves garlic, finely minced
½ t	fennel seeds (optional)
1 t	brown mustard seeds
1	dried whole bay leaf
1-2 t	fresh grated ginger or more to taste
1 t	ground cumin seeds
½ T	ground coriander seeds
½ T	dry dill or basil (optional)
¼ t	thyme (optional)
1 can	coconut milk or puree of a fresh coconut and the water
½ c	soaked raw cashews (optional)
pinch	saffron
to taste	salt and pepper
	fresh lemon wedges

1. If using the nuts, soak cashews overnight in pure water and rinse well.
2. In larger soup pot, put water on to boil. Prep vegetables into bite-sized pieces.
3. Rinse lentils well and add to water with optional 1-2 pieces seaweed such as kelp or wakame. Skim foam as they cook. The lentils will start dissolving when done and give a broth-like consistency.
4. Add prepared vegetables to lentil broth, mixing in more water as needed. Cook until almost tender (adding slower cooking vegetables such as winter squash, green beans etc. first or in smaller pieces).
5. Roast the garlic, mustard (and fennel) seeds in the ghee or oil.
6. When the mustard seeds pop, add bay leaf, ginger, cumin, coriander, thyme to the ghee mixture and gently cook a few more minutes.
7. Add dill and/or basil to the mixture just enough to warm the last herb/s and turn the mixture into the soup, along with coconut milk, saffron and soaked cashews. Bring back to simmer and cook about 5 minutes longer.

8. Squeeze ½ -1 lemon to taste just before serving, or include a small wedge on the plate.

### **Comments and Tips**

Cooking seaweed with the legumes enhances their digestibility and gives delicious extra minerals to mother and baby.

Recipe from Sonya Bastow, Postpartum AyurDoula

## **Sweet 'n Sour Azuki Soup**

---

This is designed as a one-pot meal, from start to finish. A crock pot makes for no brainer/no attention cooking or a pressure cooker makes it quick. Otherwise it is not as quick, but it can be easy if you learn to cook them well.

**Prep Time: 20 min.      Cooking Time: 30 min.-3 hours (depending on method)**

2/3 c	adzuki beans, soaked overnight
5 c	fresh pure water for cooking or more for long stovetop cooking
2-4"	piece of kombu
2 T	ghee (or sesame oil)
2-3 t	tamarind paste (or 2 T lemon juice and use 1 T sugar in recipe)
1 1/2 - 2 t	natural sweetener (not honey)
2 t	vata churna or curry powder
2/3 t	salt or to taste
1-2 t	coriander powder (it is sweet, cooling, and mildly diuretic)
1/2 t	dry ginger powder or 1 T fresh grated
1/3 t	paprika or black pepper (or 2 pinches cayenne)
1-2	sliced cloves garlic, golden sautéed or 1/8 tsp hing
4 T	minced parsley (optional)
1/2 c	coconut milk (optional)
1 c	carrots (optional)
1/2-1 c	okra (especially good), asparagus, fresh fennel or fresh dill (optional)
2/3 c	barley and extra water (optional)

1. Bring water to boil and add to crock pot if using this method. Add rinsed soaked beans.
2. Bring to slow boil, skim any foam and toss. Add kombu, and ghee while beans are cooking for best flavor.
3. Simmer for 2 hours in crock pot until quite tender (3 hours if you start with cool water; 1 1/2 - 2 hours on the stove top). Alternatively, pressure cook for 20-30 minutes.
4. You can add optional additional vegetables approximately 30 minutes before beans are done.
5. 15 minutes before you are ready to eat, warm your seasonings as a tarka in some ghee, then add to the soup, stirring tamarind and sweetener in to dissolve. Add optional parsley (or cilantro) just prior to serving.
6. Serve over rice or with chapatti.

### **Comments and Tips**

For total one dish meal, use the vegetables, increase seasonings, and add 2/3 cup barley to the soaking and long cooking. Increase water for soup, or allow it to become a khichadi like stew. Just remember not to add cool water to cooking beans or they get tough. The adzuki beans, parsley, coriander, (and optional barley), asparagus, fennel or dill all benefit the kidneys.

Vata churna may be ordered from MAPI.com online. It makes doshic cooking easy.

## **Mother's Black Bean Recipe**

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### **Soaking and Blanching Almonds**

---

Simple why and hows. Enjoy a few well-chewed after birth daily if desired, almonds are said to be especially good for ojas, sattva, serotonin, and lactation supportive as well.

#### **Quick and Easy!**

8-16 whole almonds per day per person  
1/4 c or so water to soak overnight (recommended option)  
1/2 c or so boiling water to blanch

1. In a heat-resistant blanching bowl, pour boiling water over your soaked or dried almonds.
2. Soak for just 2-3 minutes, or until cool enough to handle. If it gets cooler, the skins will stick again.
3. Squeeze the almonds between your fingers, one at a time, and be careful they don't shoot across the room! Put them in another bowl.
4. Rinse them when all are done. If you do too big a batch and they start sticking again, just add a little fresh boiled water on rinsed almonds.

#### **Comments and Tips**

Why do we blanch almonds? It is a simple and liver protective good habit for pregnancy, postpartum and any time. The skins contain tannins which can be hard on the liver.

Yogi Bhajan interestingly taught that unlike all other times, in the immediate postpartum days women should eat 10 almonds with the skins on daily, because the skins help the uterus to shrink back into normal shape. This is not a prescription for such problems, rather for helpful prevention. Other things, like nursing your baby, are a stronger influence in this way of course, but you can choose on this basis if you like. Yogi Bhajan was an expert in Ayurvedic wisdom and taught his Sikh devotees many such things.

Why do we soak nuts? The enzyme inhibitors get released and they not only digest better, but they come alive and the fats begin to convert to other nutrients. A tiny white sprout is fine but when it turns green it becomes more vatagenic, risking gas from the raw plant influences again.

Some people prefer, or even know they handle roasted nuts better, or raw, or for instance, cashews or sunflower seeds better than almonds. It is wise to listen to this instinct!

## Pumpkin Seeds Roasted with Braggs

---

- 1 c pumpkin seeds
- 2 c pure water for soaking

1. Soak seeds in water a few hours or overnight.
2. Drain and rinse.
3. In heavy bottomed skillet put the seeds and squirt about 1 T Braggs Liquid Aminos.
4. Stir constantly until seeds pop. You may need to add a little water to keep it from sticking too much.

Recipe from Sonya Bastow, CPPAD, Mettadoula

## Tarator Sauce (Middle East)

---

Traditionally served on falafel sandwiches (which we avoid along with other deep-fried foods during the postpartum Kayakalpa window), this sauce wonderfully complements a bowl of dahl for complete protein, or as a sauce over vegetables, baked yam or rice. The thinned version is suitable after the first 10 days postpartum or for most second or third trimester pregnant women.

**Prep Time: 15 min.**

**Serves 4-8 (depending on other menu items)**

- 1/2 c tahini (roasted)
- 1/4 c lime (or lemon) juice
- 1 T maple syrup
- 1/4 t salt
- 1/4 c water or more (or olive oil to desired consistency-see options below)

1. Puree ingredients well in blender. If adding water, hot or warm will work best.
2. Serve over zucchini or other vegetables, baked yam, quinoa, rice, etc,

### Comments and Tips

Add water for desired consistency-lemon thickens the tahini surprisingly. Optionally add 3-4 T of olive oil (softens both texture, cools the recipe some, and combines well for taste) and use more water to thin. Offered here are some simple variations and gourmet variations, add a little lemon, mandarin or orange peel, maybe 1 t minced. A generous addition of dried dill herb, tarragon, and/or toasted cumin seeds; or a little black pepper or cayenne; or some grated ginger or toasted garlic - these are particularly tasty additions. Maple syrup also combines very well since tahini has a bitterness and is more warming than the other nuts and seeds-add 1 t or more to taste.

You can, of course, play with other nut butters or purees similarly.

Always use your sesame roasted, not raw, according to Dr. Shrestha, to avoid a certain toxin accumulation.

## Flaxed and Curried Cottage Cheese

---

This recipe handles amazingly well without phlegm even for sensitive systems like Ysha's which otherwise starts to get sick eating organic cottage cheese 2 days in a row. We don't cook it - bring to room temperature, and serve over warm foods or in a hot chapatti, after 3 weeks postpartum.

**Prep Time: 10 min.**

**Serves 4**

1	pint low fat organic cultured cottage cheese or European quark
6 T	highest-lignan flax oil (brown in color)
2	pinches cardamom
1 t	curry powder or turmeric
½-1 t	finely grated lemon peel or 5 drops of lemon oil (optional)
½ t	honey or other sweetener (optional)
¼ - ½ c	water to thin (optional)
1-2 pinches	cayenne (optional)

1. Bring cheese to room temperature before serving. Fine grate optional peel.
2. Use a chopstick to stir the flax oil lignans off the bottom of your bottle, or store in freezer on its side and measure - shaking is not enough.
3. Put all ingredients in a food processor and pulse until smooth, and if desired thin with water or whey.

### Comments and Tips

Barlean's or Flora brands have better lignan content than others.

The flax oil begins to bind with the sulphur bearing protein in the dairy. This is what our cell walls are made of - ideally. The electron-rich lipid (flax) and a sulphur-bearing protein (cottage cheese) apparently begin to create electron-sulphur bonds before it gets into the body. The flax oil then does not degrade so easily and gets converted MORE easily into the desired end-product essential fatty acids (EFAs).

This is not just about looks, or a little creamy sauce. Enjoy generous serving of this as a main dish protein item. Not thinning makes a very thick sauce, suitable for filling. Thinning is better when you first start with it, for agni protective and rejuvenative wisdom after birth. Choose your thickness - this also makes a wonderful sauce over rice, pasta, vegetables, or just for dipping chapattis in.

Remember that if you don't puree the cottage cheese, when you add the lignan-rich oil and turmeric to it, it looks much like breastfeeding baby poops - a little runny, yellow curds :

This recipe is delicious with ricotta cheese also-and you don't need a blender, really. Maybe add ½ tsp or more turmeric or curry powder and salt. Season sweet or savory, like the pasta options but remember not to cook with the flax oil.

A reminder, if you are thinking smoothies. Dr. Lad reports that regular use of banana with dairy is carcinogenic, so try honey instead.

Try honey, vanilla and a bolder pinch of saffron.

Or dried green herbs to taste, pepper, cayenne, and toasted cumin.

Recipe from Johanna Budwig, MD; The Oil Protein Diet; adapted by Ysha Oakes

## Paneer - Eastern Indian Fresh Cheese

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Paneer is surprisingly easy to make. It is more sattvic and easily digestible than fermented cheeses. Serve 3-4 weeks after childbirth.

**Prep Time: 10 min.**

**Cooking Time: 10 min.**

**Serves 4-8**

1/2 gallon whole milk  
1/2 c lemon juice (for softer paneer) or 1 c yogurt (for firmer paneer) or  
about 2 c whey

1. In a heavy, tall-sided pot bring milk to boil on medium high. Just before foam begins to rise, stir in curdling agent - the lemon juice or yogurt or whey. Continue stirring over heat until curd begins to separate from liquid whey.
2. For a softer paneer, add your souring agent while warming; turn off heat when separated. Set aside few minutes while lining a large sieve or colander with clean cotton dish towel or several layers of cheesecloth, large enough to tie into a bag. Salt if desired. Strain, reserving the strained liquid ( whey), if desired. If you want to have a smooth-edged cheese for cutting or serving, take care how you set it up to drain. You will see, it takes only minutes before it is ready! When cooler you can squeeze out any extra liquid. Best served fresh but if you must, refrigerate and use in 2-3 days.
3. For harder cheese, boil with the curdling agent. You may hang overnight, or just till well drained, and press into a container to store. Cut into slices or cubes.

### **Comments and Tips**

Fresh paneer in our home has a hard time getting cooked further-it tastes so good fresh. My son loves it on sandwiches or in chapattis.

Make it softer first, waiting a couple weeks or more postpartum as this still is a denser food, harder to digest as a result. Paneer is much easier to handle than fermented cheeses for most people, at any time, and makes a very satisfying and soothing midday meal or even in breakfast options (best avoided in the evenings). It is delicious served alongside something more moist and soupy.

Dress it up when you have sliced or cubed it and gently sauté for optional light golden browning. Adding seasonings such as Italian herb mix, or cumin powder and turmeric, with oregano or thyme, salt and pepper or paprika or cayenne all make for very special seasoning. Very nice this way with Caroline's Red sauce over pasta.

Note that you can easily substitute paneer in many (vata-increasing) tofu recipes.

Some enjoy using the slightly sour whey for calcium-enhanced cooking or as a warm beverage on its own. Whey is fine for soups but not cooking legumes, since it coats the proteins and they stay tough, so use near end of cooking.

## Sprouted Mung Loaf

---

A favorite of my favorite Nepalese friend, this is a very nourishing, protein rich food. Steam cooked in some simple mold (we use a deep stainless bowl), it presents well with a sauce and garnish. Serve several weeks after birth. This is a more solid food though fairly easy on the digestion.

**Prep Time: 20 min. (plus sprouting time)      Cooking Time: 40 min.**  
**Serves 8**

1 c	whole mung beans, washed and soaked enough hot water to puree mung beans to a cream
2 T	fresh ginger, peeled and coarsely chopped
¼ c	ghee
2-3 cloves	fresh minced garlic
1 - 1 1/2 T	coriander powder
2 t	toasted cumin seeds curry leaves, thyme, oregano, minced lemon peel, and/or (crumbled) bay leaves (optional)
1 t	salt
1t	sugar
1/2 - 1 t	brown mustard seeds
1/2 t	turmeric powder
1/2 t	ground black pepper or 1/8 t cayenne
3	pinches hing
1 c	vegetables such as steamed and pureed carrot, winter squash or parsnip (optional)

1. Soak whole mung beans 1 1/2 to 3 days, until just slightly sprouted,. At this stage, they are a very high protein vegetable less the usual enzyme inhibitors of a legume.
2. Steam or bake optional vegetable additions.
3. Grind beans, water and ginger to a smooth creamy puree,. Add optional vegetables to the puree, as well as ample fresh ginger. A good blender may work, even better is a wheat grass juicer or champion fruit and vegetable juicer or meat grinder.
4. Make a tarka (ghee and warmed spices) by browning garlic in ghee and then adding the rest of the spices. Add the tarka to the puree.
5. We use a straight-sided stainless mixing bowl to steam the preparation and give it good shape when turned out on the plate. Coat your bowl with ghee or butter, flour it, and add the mung puree.
6. Set your simply shaped mold pan, coated with ghee and flour, inside a larger pot in a sufficient water bath to steam-cook the inner "mold" pot. See details below.
7. Stove top cook for 30-40 minutes. Oven may take longer, at 350 F. Watch that the top doesn't get too dry, and that there is always sufficient water in the steaming pot (you can add water as needed).When a knife comes out clean from the pate, and it smells done, take it out of the pot and turn onto a plate. You may need to loosen it first a little

### **Cooking Tips**

This serves nicely with a slightly sweet pureed carrot or lemony white sauce, sweet lassi, and a moist vegetable dish. Add to the menu a rice pudding or moist semolina halva for dessert - either of them

made without milk in this case if serving alongside, for best tummy comforts. Or enjoy the milk-rich version of these sweets for snack a little later. These grain-based sweets will compliment for best protein use.

In the summertime, and after 5-6 weeks postpartum, try this with vanilla yogurt as a quick and delicious sauce (one of those accidental discoveries!), or a yogurt cucumber raita. Can be sliced when cool and browned in the skillet a little later in the day, or for someone's sandwich. Postpartum window moms will want to be careful with that sandwich idea, it may constipate early on. For after maybe 4-5 weeks postpartum (make it moist) and any other time you like.

If there is a delay in preparation time, rinse and refrigerate the soaking beans to slow sprouting, as the green tipped sprouts can increase vata -and cause gas.

The mold means a rounded/domed pan so you can later turn the loaf out in one nicely shaped mound.

This can be done in the oven or on stovetop, or if you have a steamer without anything protruding in the middle that fits inside another pan, line it with a smooth cloth to keep the loaf from oozing through the steaming holes. It is best if some steam accesses at least the top of the loaf as well as the sides of the pan, so we can use a steamer or a solid bowl. I use a stainless medium sized mixing bowl with a lip that hangs in a larger saucepan.

Recipe from Dr. Sarita Shrestha, BAMS Ayurved

## Lentil-Cheese Balls

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Serve with well buttered pasta and fresh basil, and some grilled zucchini and carrots for an all 'round American style (nouveau?), very high protein meal. The rest of the family might eat a tossed salad on the side, and Mom can share some special dessert you have been thinking of in the nourishing snacks chapter. Wait at least 5 weeks for this one, but then it will be a crowd pleaser or good 6 weeks' meal.

**Prep Time: 15 min. (plus soaking)      Cooking Time: 2.5 hours**

**Serves 16 balls**

2/3	lentils
4 c	pure water
1/2 t	hing
2 T	chopped fresh parsley
1/2 c	ricotta or panir cheese
1 c	quick oats or soft breadcrumbs
2 t each	olive oil and Braggs

1. Soak lentils overnight. Rinse well and put about 4 cups of water on to boil.
2. Add lentils to hot water and cook for 1.5 - 2 hours, or until very soft. (optionally, pressure cook). Drain and puree.
3. Heat oven to 400 degrees and grease a baking sheet.
4. In a large bowl, mix lentil puree, cheese or nuts, hing, breadcrumbs, parsley, and soy sauce. Mix thoroughly, moistening if needed.
5. Divide mixture into at least 8 parts. Shape each part into 2 balls, then coat evenly with bread crumbs or oat flakes.
6. Bake for 30 minutes until golden brown, and serve hot with pasta and our red sauce, or as a snack, warm.

### Comments and Tips

Vegan option: Use 1/2 cup soaked and finely minced or ground pine nuts, pecans, almonds, sunflower seeds, brazil nuts, or other seeds.

## VEGETABLES

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Remember to look at other recipe sections for more vegetable-based dishes.

### Upma - Farina with Vegetables

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This Southern Indian breakfast, side or snack is a kind of vegetable pudding - soft and eaten with a spoon. Traditionally often made with whole black peppercorns, it is nice with freshly ground pepper. The final product is a creamy vegetable dish, delicious, buttery, moist, oily, and warm. Less moisture allows a sliceable bar food nice for outings.

**Prep Time: 20 min.**

**Cooking Time: 15-20 min.**

**Serves: 4-5**

3 c	water
2 c	carrots, summer squash, asparagus, spinach, methi, dill, or other veggies
1 c	farina (cream of wheat), coarsely ground semolina or cream of rice
1/2 c	ghee, a stick of butter, or light sesame oil
1/4 c	cilantro leaves, chopped
1-2 t	ground coriander seed
1 t	black mustard seed
1 t	cumin seeds
3 - 5	leaves curry (optional; this is not the powder but the plant)
1/2 t	turmeric powder
1 t	salt
1/3-1/2 t	coarse ground black pepper
3 pinches	hing
1/16 t	cayenne pepper or 1/4 t nutmeg (optional, to taste)

1. Wash, trim and cut vegetables into small pieces. Keep separate by type unless you know how to vary the sizes to cook in the same length of time.
2. Bring water to boil with salt and turmeric while doing step 3.
3. In a medium heavy skillet roast the farina in half or more of the butter or oil, over medium heat until a shade darker, more golden or slightly brown. Stir frequently. It may look after a while like grains of sand at the seashore, with a slight froth on it.
4. Gradually add the hot water to the toasted farina on lower heat at first, stirring constantly to avoid lumping and until it has the consistency of cream of wheat cereal. If this is a new technique for you, a whisk helps ensure there is no lumping. Set aside during step 4.
5. In separate skillet, warm the rest of the cooking oil. When ghee is clear, add spices, such as the mustard seed, garlic, and cumin. When they pop and garlic is golden, add fenugreek seed, hing, ginger, and coriander powder and when fenugreek has toasted, add all the vegetables, long cooking ones first. Sauté them until tender - adding a splash of water and a lid if needed to prevent drying out.
6. Remove lid if you used it, and mix the farina into vegetables. Add optional pinches of cayenne or nutmeg. Add minced cilantro, reserving a little for garnish with an extra grind of black pepper when you turn it out onto a platter, plate or bowl.
7. Upma may firm up to a consistency you can cut when cool, and may be used as a snack with hot tea a little later.

8. Of course we can substitute fresh basil or dill or methi leaves for the cilantro. Or we can choose to do an American or Chinese, Thai or other cuisine's seasonings.

Recipe from Rasa Mac Knight, AyurDoula, Miriam Kasin Hospidar, Usha Lad and other cooks.

## Postpartum Methi Vegetable Soup

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Methi (fresh fenugreek leaves) is a well-known and enjoyed Indian vegetable, worth getting to know if you have the chance for its many medicinal properties and good flavor. This is a mixed vegetable soup, well balanced against gas for newly birthed mothers. It is good for milk production and recommended among the first postpartum vegetables.

**Prep Time: 15 min.**

**Cooking Time: 15-20 min.**

**Serves: 6**

2 T	ghee or sesame oil
1 t	fenugreek seeds
1/4 t	turmeric
2 cloves	garlic, minced
1 T	fresh grated ginger
1/2 c	diced carrots
1/2 c	chopped green beans
1/2 c	chopped zucchinis
1/2 c	chopped spinach
1/2 c	chopped fenugreek leaves
3 c	water
1 t	ground black pepper
1 t	salt
1/2	juice of lime

1. Heat ghee or oil in a large pan. Add the garlic and fenugreek seeds and fry them gently on medium heat till they are golden brown, but not dark.
2. Then add the ginger and fry for about 30 seconds. Quickly add the vegetables and stir-fry on high heat till they become bright colored.
3. Add the water, black pepper, turmeric and salt and bring to a boil.
4. Turn the heat down to medium and cover and cook for about 14 minutes or until the vegetables are tender.
5. Add the lime juice and serve warm.

### **Comments and Tips**

Substitute fresh dill weed or even basil, all good for milk production, if you can't get the methi.

Recipe from Aparna Khanolkar, Ayurvedic chef, postpartum doula and author, *A Mother's Blessing*

## Turkish Zucchini Olive Oil Dish

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This is a soothing and satisfying slow-cooked dish from Turkey that abundantly uses (fresh) dill and is moist, nourishing and grounding. It is usually served at room temperature (with a dollop of fresh yoghurt) but during the postpartum time, may be best – and delicious – eaten warm, and without the dairy.

**Prep Time: 10 min.**

**Cooking Time: 30-40 min.**

**Serves 4**

3 medium	zucchini
½	onion, finely chopped
¼ c	olive oil
¼ c	basmati or jasmine rice
½ c	fresh dill, finely chopped (or 2-3 T dried herb)
1 T	sugar
1 t	salt
4-5 c	water
1	lemon, cut into wedges

1. Heat olive oil (along with a little water) over medium heat, add onions and cook for about 5 min.
2. Chop zucchini into small cubes, add to pot, along with the rest of the ingredients. Top with water, bring to boil, then reduce heat and simmer over low heat for 30-40 min. until vegetables are very tender and rice has plumped up. Check every now and then to see if you need to add more water—the resulting dish should be moist and juicy.
3. Serve warm or at room temperature with a squeeze of lemon, and another drizzle of oil.

Recipe from Ulli Allmendinger, MSc Ayurveda and author of *Sattva—Ayurvedic Energy Snacks for Body and Soul*

## Mother's Gourmet Guacamole in 5

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**Prep Time: 5 min. (Basic Recipe) or 10 min. (Gourmet Version)**

**Serves 1-4 (as snack or meal condiment)**

### **Basic Recipe**

1	ripe avocado
1	pinch hing
	squeeze of fresh lime juice to taste
	salt to taste

1. Peel, core, and fork-mash your avocado.
2. Season with hing, lime juice and salt to taste (if you don't have hing in your kitchen, try black pepper and oregano).
3. Enjoy on a fresh wheat, spelt or rice flour tortilla, or as a side relish with your meal.

### **Gourmet Version**

Serve after 8-10 days, room-temperature with something warm.

- 1 ripe avocado
- 1 medium clove fresh garlic
- 1 -2 t olive oil
- 1/2 t dried oregano
- 1-2 t fresh lime juice
- 1/3 t toasted cumin seeds or powder (optional)
- salt and black pepper, paprika or pinch cayenne pepper to taste

1. Mince your garlic and use a small heavy skillet with olive oil to gently but thoroughly cook to golden brown, while toasting cumin seeds. Oregano gently warmed at the end of this process is delicious. Crumble as you add it to the pan or bowl to release the flavors more.
2. While your pan is warming, peel, core, and fork-mash a ripe avocado in a bowl. Add a squeeze or more of lime juice, salt and pepper to taste. Be sure to use black pepper, paprika, fresh grated ginger or small pinch cayenne for mothers.
3. Add your roasted spices from the pan, mash all together and enjoy!

### **Abundantly Dilled Carrots and Chard**

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... and other leafy green ideas. An old settler's cookbook says, "And the greens can be eaten too." The settlers only used the tender stems, not the greens – perhaps the greens didn't keep well and got overlooked? Serve after 10 days postpartum.

**Prep Time: 15 min.**

**Cooking Time: 20 min.**

**Serves 4**

- 1 bunch fresh chard
- 3 large carrots
- 1 bunch fresh dill
- 3-4 T ghee
- 1 t garlic, minced
- 1 T fresh ginger, grated
- 1 t cumin seeds
- 2-3 pinches hing
- ¼ t turmeric
- salt and pepper to taste
- ½ c coconut milk (optional)
- squeeze of lime juice

1. Wash and separate stems from tender chard leaves. Chop stems finely (like celery) and tear leaves into small pieces. Wash and peel carrots, cut into thin slices. Steam both carrots and chard stems for 5-10 min. or until tender.

2. In a skillet, heat ghee, add cumin seeds and wait till they pop, then turn down heat and add garlic. Brown gently and thoroughly, then add hing, turmeric, ginger, as well as steamed stems and carrots and chard leaves. Sauté for 2-3 min., possibly adding ½ c water, then add dill and coconut milk, and cook for another few minutes.
3. Season with salt & pepper and serve with additional squeeze of lime for both taste and mineral absorption.

### Comments and Tips

With many green leafy vegetables—except kale and collard greens—one bunch shrinks a lot. For spinach, figure that a bunch serves 1-2; with chard 2-4, depending on the size. Most of the leafy greens are also somewhat bitter and astringent, which means they can pacify and satisfy vata best with added oiliness, spice, as well as sweetness, sour and salt for best taste.

Use abundant (or exclusively) dill weed as a green vegetable, which is especially suitable the first post partum weeks. Dill supports milk production and also does not have the oxalic acid of spinach or chard. You may also substitute fresh fennel for the dill.

Remember that dill and fennel don't grow happily together—choose one or the other per meal.

As another option, you can stir the cooked greens into 1 pinch hing or ¼ t ginger powder, warmed in some ghee or oil and ½ t toasted fennel seeds, ¼ t turmeric, and 1 t fresh grated ginger, and some cubed paneer (fresh cheese).

Dress it up with a few good quality olives (salty/sour) later on, but enjoy regularly with a little lime juice.

## Kale and Carrots Cumino

---

As you may have noticed, kale keeps its volume - unlike spinach and chard - and it takes longer to cook. It also does not have the oxalic acid of spinach and chard, making it more directly alkalizing on the body systems. Cook well, about 15 minutes or longer. Go heavier on seasonings as it is more vata increasing.

**Prep Time: 10 min.**

**Cooking Time: 15 min.**

**Serves 2**

8-10 larger	kale leaves - black, red, or the usual green are fun color-texture variety
2 medium	carrots
2 T	butter or ghee
2-3 pinches	hing (asafoetida)
1 t	cumin seeds
2 t	coriander seed powder
1/4 t	raw sugar
	salt & lime juice to taste

1. Follow directions for basic greens recipe preparation, cooking carrots (and optional minced stems first) with cumin seed and hing in the ghee.
2. When carrots are becoming tender, add coriander, salt, optional sugar, and bite sized pieces of the kale. Add splash of water and cover immediately.
3. Cook on lower heat until tender and serve hot with squeeze of lime.

### Comments and Tips

Delicious with a well seasoned gravy consistency dhal or a cream sauce or flax oil-fresh cheese sauce served over it (no need for lime with the latter).

As with most of the recipes, ingredient quantities are approximate. If you are not using stems, you may wish to reduce slightly, or if feeling kapha as well as vata, you may

want extra!

Note the coriander powder is a little sweet tasting, and reduces pitta from both the carrots and greens, while supporting digestion. For more kick, this is delicious with 1/2 - 1 tablespoon of fresh grated ginger, added 5 minutes before done.

## Kale with Roasted Sesame Oil

---

Serve after 10 days or more postpartum for delicious, warming oriental flavors.

**Prep Time: 5 min.                      Cooking Time: 12-15 minutes**  
**Serves 3-5 (depending on size of the bunch)**

1	bunch kale
2-4 T	dark toasted sesame oil
1/2 t	garlic, minced (or 2-3 pinches hing)
1 T	fresh ginger, grated
1-2 T	sesame seeds
to taste	gomasio (toasted sesame sea salt) or Bragg's Liquid Aminos
	squeeze of lime

1. Wash and separate kale greens from stems. Chop stems finely and tear greens into small pieces. Steam stems for 10 min. After 5 -6 min. add kale leaves and steam together for another 5 min. at least (they should both be very tender).
2. Gently heat sesame oil (it does not tolerate high heat well), add garlic or hing and brown for a few minutes, then add kale stems first along with ginger and sauté for 3-4 min.
3. Add, sesame seeds and kale leaves and sautee for another 2-3 minutes (you may want to add a little water).
4. Serve topped with gomasio or Bragg's to taste as well as a squeeze of lime (helps absorption).

## Grounding Glazed Vegetables with Thyme

---

Very yummy and very easy to make, these baked root veggies go great with greens and a tahini sauce or as a side to dahl. Avoid serving heavy starches like the yam with dairy (or meat) dishes. Serve 10-14 days or more postpartum.

**Prep Time: 15 min.                      Cooking Time: 60 min.**  
**Serves 4**

1 each	medium beet, yam, carrot, parsnip (or only one type if desired)
1/4-1/2	medium butternut or other winter squash (acorn, kabocha or spaghetti)
1/4 c	warm ghee, or as needed
1/4 c	succanat, dark agave or maple syrup
1-2 T	fresh ginger, grated
2 T	thyme leaves or to taste
	salt and pepper to taste

1. Choose from your choice of vegetables. Prepare beets peeled and cubed, yams peeled and cubed larger than the beets (or two-inch slices), carrots and parsnip cut in two-inch pieces (the wider part of the carrot needs to be cut smaller), the butternut squash peeled and cut lengthwise and then sliced two-inches thick, or any size/shape you like for a single vegetable.
2. Thoroughly rub the veggies with ghee, picking them up in your hands. Use enough ghee so they are all completely covered.
3. Drizzle dark agave, pure maple syrup or jaggery syrup over the top, then sprinkle with a generous amount of thyme leaves
4. Salt and pepper, then mix and put into oven at 400 F for 45 minutes. Add grated ginger and turn to blend. Finish baking another 15 minutes or until veggies can be pierced easily with a fork.

### Comments and Tips

This will roughly fill a 9x9 pan. If too much, just use a larger pan and more veggies.

Recipe from Sonya Bastow, CPPAD, MettaDoula

## Red Pasta Sauce

---

This is a delicious substitute for people who do not tolerate tomato sauce, and that means early postpartum mothers and babies. If your beet or carrots are large increase the seasonings, and the other way round. This is grounding and blood-building and best to enjoy after 2 – 3 weeks.

**Prep Time: 15 min.**

**Cooking time: 20-25 min.**

**Serves 8**

10 medium	carrots
1 medium-large	beet, peeled and chopped
1/4 c	water for desired puree consistency
1/2 c	olive oil or ghee to taste
1 1/2 T	basil, dried
2 T	lime juice
2 cloves	garlic, minced (optional) or 1/2 t hing
	jaggery, succanat or maple syrup if too sour(optional)
to taste	salt & pepper
1/2 tsp	thyme, rosemary, oregano and/or marjoram (optional)

1. Clean and trim carrots and beets.
2. Moist-bake, steam or boil the vegetables until very soft. Puree in food processor when cool enough to handle.
3. Warm the hing in a little olive oil and sauté the garlic until golden.
4. Remove from heat and add basil just to warm.
5. Add garlic, basil, salt, pepper, lime juice and the rest of the olive oil to your sauce.
6. Re-heat the sauce and thin with more water if desired.
7. Serve like tomato sauce over any well-cooked pasta with sauteed Paneer (Indian Fresh Cheese, see recipe) or a spoon of ricotta or cottage cheese on top and a green vegetable side dish.

Recipe adapted for postpartum from Caroline Zeeman, Art of Living retreat chef

## CONDIMENTS, GHEES, SEASONINGS

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Mothers with gallbladder, alcoholic or liver issues must consult with your doctor and a trained Ayurvedic medical professional for appropriate quantity and type of fats.

### Ghee - Crock-pot Method

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This is my preferred way of making ghee. Although my crock pot has to be manually unplugged to turn it off, it gives the freedom to leave the kitchen while I work on other things, without much distraction of monitoring. Smell, observe colors and textures, and stir from time to time.

2 pounds      organic cultured and unsalted butter

1. Place the butter in your pot on low setting. If you have the low setting on your crock pot choice, then you may be able to leave it on all night but do it in the daytime first to see how long it takes (ruining 2 pounds of organic butter is a big disappointment!). Start earlier in the day and let cook all day, very gently, checking it occasionally.
2. Take care when the solids at the bottom are getting stringy or stuck together. When ready there will be a white or golden brown crust on the top and the white sediment beginning to brown (this may happen first, in which case, move to step 3).
3. Skim the crust off the top and pour the golden ghee through a cotton cloth into a stainless steel or glass container. Always store in glass, ceramic or steel container. Keep closed, but there is no need to refrigerate if you use it regularly and have properly prepared it.

#### Comments and Tips

Some pots only plug in for on and pull out for off, so you have to watch the ghee more carefully. Just don't let it burn on the bottom when the crust is forming and solids begin to turn golden. This stage is important, as it will burn easily and in fairly short time at the bottom, turning your ghee brown.

If the butter is organic, the top skimmings will be richly nourishing and delicious. If not, the crust, and especially the solids at the bottom will taste very weird and unhealthy. Some of us use the top skimmings for cookies, vegetables, or even medicinal uses.

Cultured butter gives the best and most authentic flavor and health benefits.

Recipe from Ysha Oakes, PPAD

### Ghee - Saucepan Method

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With this method it is important not to leave ghee unattended, so that it does not scorch or burn while melting. There are those who swear one should never stir the ghee while cooking. Why? This has not been given to say.

2 pounds      unsalted organic butter

1. Place butter in one quart saucepan over low heat. Allow the butter to melt completely, and then turn the heat to lowest possible temperature. Stir from time to time to be sure solids are not sticking to the bottom.

2. Do not skim the foam. Over the hours it will render back more ghee into the liquid, and become a thin crust which can be skimmed easily without waste.
3. The ghee is done when all moisture is released and milk solids at the bottom of the pan have turned light golden brown and have a nutty aroma.
4. Remove from heat and cool slightly. Pour the golden ghee through a cotton cloth into a stainless steel or glass container.

### **Comments and Tips**

Always keep your ghee covered when not using because ghee absorbs odors and smells including toxins from the air or cupboard. Always use a clean spoon when taking ghee.

Store extra jars in the fridge or freezer, just in case a little moisture or milk solids did not get removed.

## **First Days' Agni Support - Variations**

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This "recipe" has many variations. Most importantly, use something. We can gain benefit using American kitchen familiars, even just ginger, black pepper, mixed with some clove powder, similarly. What is available to you and suits you may be perfect.

The purpose is to get digestive "fires" burning again, so that food is absorbed and serves mother and baby without gas, bloating, or deeper unseen challenges to rejuvenation. Some grandmothers say that the pepper helps tone the uterus. Ayurvedic doctors explain that spices such as ginger, clove, pepper, and/or pippali help start the digestive fire (agni), which get shut down by labor and birth needs, back up to function.

## **First Day Black Pepper Ghee**

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Ghee helps balance the sharpness of pepper, as does the rice. Avoid salt if serving a milk milk-based dish with it. The ghee is very soothing and carries the properties of herbs and spices deep into the tissues. This variation is easy to make for Westerners. Use especially the first few days as a condiment alongside other foods, for several days after childbirth if not using another version of agni support recipe that meal.

### **Quick and Easy!**

2 T	hot, freshly prepared basmati rice
1-2 t	ghee
1/2 t	ground black pepper
1 pinch	salt

Right after delivery and at the beginning of lunch and dinner, mix all ingredients and serve very warm to the newly delivered mother.

Recipe from Aparna Khanolkar

## **Immediate Post Delivery Oleation**

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Make before the due window if you plan to use this recipe. The traditional Nepali first postpartum food for mothers is a tablespoon or two of spiced ghee. When appetite comes up, then she is fed some version of rice pudding or very hot very moist steamed rice, with lots of this spiced ghee and generous amount of iron rich sugar.

ginger

pippali  
black pepper  
ghee  
water

Optional use the panchaloka 5-spice mix instead

1. Mix spices in equal parts.
2. Add 10 Tbs of the mix to about 2 quarts of water. Boil slowly until nearly all water is evaporated.
3. Add about 3/4 cup of ghee (about 3 sticks of butter worth) and continue gently dehydrating the herbs in the ghee.
4. Strain through a thin cloth and serve warm right after birth, and over a blender, easy to digest food for the first few days as desired.
5. This is not necessary to refrigerate.

### **Comments and Tips**

This takes a long time to make, yet often this sort of herbalized ghee is most classically used.

When in Florida, I learned that many Krishna community mothers have been taught by their Indian women-friends to mix a teaspoon of equal parts ginger, pepper and nutmeg or clove, and take before meals, in honey or ghee.

Mothers with high cholesterol will benefit from these spiced recipes. They may choose to use sesame oil instead of ghee here.

Recipe from Dr. Sarita Shrestha, OBGyn, BAMS

## **Panchaloka Spices**

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Pancha means 5, and the classical Ayurvedic practice includes all these herbs. Chitrak is rather tasteless but powerful for re-starting digestive fires and specifically, for fat metabolism (meda dhatu agni). Our mothers do very well with it. We use it in the First Day's Rice Konji, a pasayam. Use in foods generously for the first few days after birth, or as needed.

ginger  
black pepper  
pippali  
pippali mool (root)  
chitrak

Mix in equal proportions and use to season puddings, herbalized ghee as above, rice, soups, hot milk or as desired.

Recipe from Dr. Maneesh Thite, BAMS

## **Hot climate agni support**

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Although aloe is very cooling and can increase vata, mixed with the pippali or panchaloka spices, it is used in hot damp climates. Used for first few days after birth to help cleanse womb and ignite agni.

½-1 tsp      pippali  
1-2 T        aloe gel

Mix and take twice daily, with meals

### Comments and Tips

Be careful with aloe not to use too much – it can also increase the downward motion called apana vayu, which can increase lochia (postpartum bleeding).

Recipe from Dr. Rucha Kelkar, BAMS, Light on Ayurveda Journal article on Postpartum care.

## Garlic Chutney - for daily postpartum fare

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Garlic is used in many dishes that are prepared in a certain way special for the postpartum mother. Garlic is said to maintain heat in the body, which has been dispersed by the energy output of labor, the confusions of surgery, and just so many changes. It supports digestion, lactation, and provides needed grounding and immune strength IF properly and well cooked. It also helps detoxify the body after birth. This chutney is potent and some say the mother should have about 1 t a day with meals for at least 40 days.

**Prep Time: 15 min.**  
**Makes 1 ½ cups**

**Cooking Time: 15–20 min.**

4 T            ghee, divided  
1/2 c         garlic, peeled  
1 c            coconut, fine shredded, unsweetened  
4 T            black peppercorns  
1/2 t         coriander seeds  
1 1/4 t        salt  
1 lime juiced if juicy

1. Heat 2 T of the ghee in a skillet on medium heat and add the garlic cloves. Fry them on medium heat for about 4 minutes.
2. When it has cooled, grind the garlic along with the rest of the ingredients in a blender to a fine paste. Add a little water for ease in grinding.
3. Heat the rest of the ghee and add the ground paste and fry on medium heat for about 12 minutes. This ensures that the garlic is cooked and the moisture has evaporated. The garlic then will release its helpful properties without negative side effects to baby or mother.

### Comments and Tips

This chutney can be served with hot rice or with some chapattis (Indian flat bread). Mothers with Pitta constitutions might reduce the black pepper and increase coriander in this recipe, at least after the first batch. Pittas are not immune to low agni conditions after birth!

Recipe from Aparna Khanolkar, *A Mother's Blessing*, her many teachers and Indian grandmothers.

## Make Your Own Herbal Chewing Mix

---

Build your digestive fire with this simple preparation. Enjoy 1-2 tsp after each meal. Chew well for maximum benefit. Keep a day or two's supply of the mixture in a small bowl on your dining table and take some with you to make it available right after a meal. Keep the remaining mix refrigerated. You can experiment with different measures of the ingredients for variety in taste. For different texture, grind roasted sesame, fennel and coconut in a coffee grinder.

½ c	fennel seeds
1 c	sesame seeds
2 c	unsweetened coconut flakes
½ tsp	turmeric
2 tsp	cardamom
1 Tbs	clove
1 tsp	ginger
1 tsp	mineral salt (or black salt if available)

1. In a cast iron pan, roast fennel and sesame seeds until they turn color to light brown (the sesame seeds will pop so cover with a splatter screen or glass lid).
2. Add coconut and roast for a few more minutes until it turns golden brown, constantly stir to prevent burning.
3. Place the coconut and sesame and fennel seeds in a bowl.
4. Add the remaining spices and stir well.
5. Let cool completely before storing in the fridge.

## Roasted Cumin and Fennel Seeds

---

Instead of fennel, try dill seeds and 1 tbs ajwain. These seeds are more head sensitive, so only very gently roast on low heat and set aside while doing the cumin.

½ c	cumin seeds
1 c	fennel seeds
¼ c	water
to taste	mineral salt (or black salt if available)

1. Dry roast seeds, one type at a time, in a cast iron pan on medium heat until they turn light brown.
2. Add seeds together back in the pan with water and stir.
3. Continue roasting until all water evaporates.
4. Add salt.

## Fresh Ginger "Pickle"

---

Simplest chutney, relish or salsa! Regularly used for a while, this will wake up your digestive enzymes naturally and get them into a rhythm. We sometimes keep enough for several meals in a small glass jar - it keeps well, refrigerated, for 2-3 days. Serve just the ginger immediately postpartum, or the "pickle" after 7 days for variety support with appetite and digestion. This is not as strong as the first day's agni supports which are favored then.

**Prep Time: 3 min.**

**Serves 1-2**

2 t ginger, freshly grated  
squeeze lime juice  
pinch salt

1. Peel and grate the ginger finely, or simply peel and thinly slice.
2. Take with optional lime and salt about 10 minutes before a meal.

**Recipe Tip**

To rekindle the digestive enzymes (agni). If this is still too complicated, just eat a thin slice of peeled fresh ginger before meals.

For pittas, you may prefer pinch sugar instead of salt.

For kaphas, you may do best with just a squeeze of lemon or only ginger, though postpartum vata gives you grace in your taste cravings.

Delicious actually served with a meal as a condiment option.

Recipe from Maharishi Ayurveda

## Simple Lime Vinaigrette

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For marinade of freshly cooked vegetables or avocado. Use of dried herbs here is more supportive in early postpartum days, as green herbs may create some gassiness and the dried will provide some green mineral nutrition and digestive support without the vata increasing effect of raw. Pittas will be most suited to this recipe, vata and kapha best forget the mint and cilantro. Serve after 10 days or more.

**Prep Time: 5 min.**

**Makes 1 ½ cups**

1/3 - 1/2 c fresh lime juice  
1 c quality olive oil  
1 T honey or other suitable sweetener, or 1/16 t stevia  
1 T herbs - dried basil, tulsi, thyme, oregano, tarragon, savory, dill weed, cilantro or mint (optional)  
salt and pepper, generous to taste  
minced garlic browned in oil, or fresh grated ginger (optional)

Blend or shake all ingredients together and enjoy. If you prefer a creamier dressing, add oil slowly after other ingredients.

## Emerald Relish

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One of my favorites—often used for Thanksgiving or Christmas. With Indian foods, we call it Emerald Chutney. With half an avocado and some toasted cumin and oregano mixed in, we call it (delicious!) Emerald Salsa. Serve after 6 weeks or when a little raw vegetable is craved and tolerated. Or add to steaming hot soup after the first one or two weeks.

**Prep Time : 10 min.**

**Makes ¾ - 1 cup**

1	medium bunch parsley
1/2 - 1 c	mint or cilantro (optional)
2 T	fresh ginger root and/or 2 cloves fresh garlic
1/4 c	fresh lime juice (more or less)
1-2 T	sesame or olive oil
2/3 - 1 1/2 t	salt
1/2 - 1 t	agave or sugar

1. Wash your greens in a basin of water to swish out all particles of dirt or sand. Change and wash again if needed. Drain and trim the tough ends only of the stems. Coarse chop with a large knife to add to your food processor, or finely chop working your way up the stems with a good chopping knife. Peel and mince garlic and/or finely grate the ginger. Juice your lime.
2. If using garlic, gently cook until golden brown in a little extra oil.
3. Put all ingredients in with the emerald greens and grind or mix. Use enough juice, possibly some water also to moisten when processing. Taste for balance.

**Comments and Tips**

Generous salting draws juices from the greens and sort of "pickles" them so they keep a few days in the refrigerator as an enzyme and digestive supporting condiment..

Delicious condiment for vegetables, grains, with curries or dahl, or in a tortilla with avocado and a fresh cheese such as paneer or ricotta.

Parsley is warming, mineral and vitamin-rich, and good for the kidneys. For pitta pacification, heavy-metal chelation or immune system support, use cilantro instead.

## Cilantro Coconut Chutney

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According to Dr. Lad, this well-loved recipe is usually tridoshic. Nearly everyone loves it! The weak digestive fires after birth give another layer to consider, and as the cilantro is raw, we wait for a few weeks after birth before serving.

**Prep Time: 10 – 15 min.**

**Makes 1 ½ - 2 cups**

1 c	fresh cilantro
1 c	water
1/8 t	black pepper, or 1-2 pinches cayenne
1 inch	fresh ginger, peeled & chopped or grated lemon peel
1/2	fresh lime juice or more
¼ - ½ t	salt or to taste
¼ t	raw sugar or honey (optional)
1 T	ghee
1 clove	garlic, minced (optional)
1 c	unsweetened shredded coconut
1/2 t	cumin seeds, toasted
1/2 t	black mustard seeds, toasted

1 pinch      hing  
4              whole curry leaves (optional)

1. Wash and clean cilantro well by swishing in a large pan or bowl of water. Drain and finely mince, or pulse in blender with the water and ginger (garlic is also delicious, first golden-browned in ghee), lime juice, salt and sugar.
2. Heat small frying pan on medium and add ghee, (optional garlic), cumin and mustard seeds. Add hing and (optional) curry leaves to crisp after seeds have popped. Cool and mix well into paste. At this point, you can also add the coconut to the popped seeds and turn off the heat, gently turning the coconut for slight roasting and thereby cooling the mixture, before adding it to the rest.
3. Stored in the refrigerator this keeps well for 2 - 3 days (although it will increase rajasic quality).

#### Comments and Tips

Some approximation of this still will come out delicious! Consider more cilantro, roasted garlic, the curry leaves are optional, add a little sugar or honey or stevia (maybe ½ - 1 t) and more salt. Carefully use the stems if tender, they are high in bone flexibility minerals.

Recipe from Usha and Vasant Lad, *Ayurvedic Cooking for Self Healing*, with postpartum variations.

## HERBED TEAS

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### Sweet Water Lactation Tea

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The best part may be the thermos of ready hot tea for Mom to drink without getting up from your rocking chair. More important work calls—both baby care and mother's rejuvenation! Serve after birth for 6 weeks or more.

**Prep Time: 7–10 min**  
**Serves 6 mugs**

2/3 t            fennel seeds  
1/3 t            fenugreek seeds  
2 quarts       pure water

1. Mix the seeds in this proportion in a little glass jar to store for easy access and use.
2. Boil water, adding 1 t only of the mixed seeds. Remove from heat, cover and steep 5 minutes or longer.
3. Refrigerate half of the unused tea for later in the day. Make fresh daily and drink generously, hot or maybe some at room temperature in hot weather.
4. Enjoy some strained seeds in soup or vegetable.

Even Easier!

1. Make this in a good thermos. Toss 1/2 teaspoon seeds only for 1 quart or liter into the thermos and fill with boiling water. Chew a few seeds with your drink. Nissan brand consistently gives 12 – 18 hour or overnight nice hot tea.
2. What could be easier? The 2-quart thermos.

### **Comments and Tips**

Note the proportions, they are not a misprint. This Ayurvedic lactation tea helps reduce acidity with fennel, gives gentle warmth and rejuvenation support from fenugreek, digestion and lactation support from both herbs and the warm liquid. Added benefit—this weak tea is hydrating, unlike normal herbal tea concentration.

## Fenugreek Tea

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Fenugreek is an unusually shaped, bitter and mildly maple-sweet tasting seed. This recipe is known to increase milk production in lactating mothers, and also to help detoxify the body after birth. It is used by Indian grandmothers for their daughters the first few days postpartum to encourage any retained placental fragments to be gently released from the uterus as well. Served 2-3 cups daily after childbirth for several days.

**Prep Time: 8 min**

**Serves 2**

2 t fenugreek seeds  
3 c water  
dark raw sugar, honey or turbinado sugar to taste

1. Place the seeds and water in a pan and bring it to a boil. Reduce heat and let the tea simmer for about 5-8 minutes.
2. Strain and drink it hot, sweetened to taste.

### **Comments and Tips**

Some of those fenugreek seeds will taste very good added to a vegetable stir fry or dahl soup. They are very nourishing.

If mother's pitta is high, use the turbinado sugar. If she is congested, fenugreek is a gentle respiratory support for this, too, and honey in the tea will also help cut phlegm. Otherwise an iron-rich sugar such as dark jaggery or succanat is best.

Recipe from Mata Prema Rathod, and Aparna Khanolkar, *A Mother's Blessing*

## Dashamool Decoction

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This classical formula is recommended in the Ayurvedic medical texts and by vaidyas for mothers to take as a decoction (concentrated tea) to benefit the pelvic organs and help remove vata from the tissues. It is calming and gently purifying and balancing to the pelvic region. It doesn't taste great, but compared to many Chinese herbal brews, you can't complain. Serve ¼ cup warm, twice daily after childbirth for 42 days, or 8 weeks after surgical birth or other trauma to the system.

**Cook Time:** Depends on stove and pot. Boil down while doing other food preparations but watch closely.

**Serves 2**

2 t dashmool (Ayurvedic ten-roots herbal compound), ground  
2 c water

1. Add water and herbs to a medium-small pot. Stir or whisk the herbs into the water so that when it boils, it does not froth out half of the herbs. Bring to boil.
2. Turn heat down to gentle boil and cook down to 1/4 size, which makes approximately 1/2 c.
3. Serve 1/4 c warm, in the morning before breakfast and after a tall glass of warm water.
4. Refrigerate the other half and serve second portion in the evening, re-warmed, about 1 hour after supper.

#### **Comments and Tips**

Anyone but Mom should make this since it burns easily and her priorities and attention are with Baby.

## Basic Herb Tea

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**Prep Time: 5 min.**

**Serves 1**

1/2 t herb powder such as tulsi, brahmi, shatavari and/or ashwagandha  
1 c water  
1/4 t fresh ginger, grated or pippali powder (optional)  
1/4 t licorice powder (avoid with hypertension/high blood pressure)

Mix herbs together and use 1/2 t or more herb powder per cup of boiling hot water. Steep for 5 minutes and sweeten to taste.

#### **Comments and Tips**

TULSI and BRAHMI herbal teas are manas herbs, which means they are calming/balancing to the mind and emotions. Tulsi is somewhat warming, and also offers gentle, immune supportive and other therapeutic effects on the respiratory system. Both are sattvic and serotonin enhancing. For winter and postpartum use, use about 1/4 part fresh (or a little dry) ginger or pippali powder; pittas can use pinch of cardamom instead. For demulcent adrenal supportive (and cooling) sweetness add licorice root powder, or substitute with fennel seed.

## CCF Tea

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This tea in a gentle way helps your body self regulate its hormones and promotes milk production, although it is not as beneficial for most as the sweetwater lactation brew. CCF tea is another digestive help also. It gently alkalizes, helps burn body toxins, remove gas and gently kindle digestion. Serve after childbirth, as desired, perhaps adding a little fresh ginger.

**Prep Time: 8-12 min.**

### **Serves 1-2**

1/2 t	cumin seed
1/2 t	coriander seed
1/2 t	fennel seeds
3 c	water

Bring water to boil, add seeds and simmer 10 minutes. Strain & drink.

### **Comments and Tips**

Mix equal parts of cumin, coriander and fennel seeds and store for convenience in small glass jar. Use 1 t per cup of tea.

You can also gently toast seeds for 1 min. before adding them to water (or storing them). It will impart great flavor.

Recipe from Dr. Vasant Lad, Ayurvedic Physician

## **Vata Tea with Cumin**

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This tea provides support for both lactation and digestion also. Serve after childbirth as desired

**Prep Time: 10 min.**

**Serves 4-8 c (or a gallon) to sip thru the day and still hydrate with it**

1/2 t	cumin seeds
1 t	fennel seeds
1/4 t	cardamom
1/4 t	licorice powder (optional)
1 pinch	ajwan seeds
small pinch	nutmeg powder
1-2 quart	pure water

1. In a heavy small skillet on medium low, gently dry roast the cumin seeds, which will impart much better flavor. Mix all ingredients together per ratio.
2. Bring water to boil at the same time you are measuring your herbs. Prepare as for other Vata teas: For strong flavor, allow about 1/2 t herbs per cup. For use throughout the day, 1/2 t per quart is ample.

**Comments and Tips** Mix a larger batch by ratio and keep in a little glass jar. To measure it out every time takes too much time and then you won't do it. Optionally grind in a coffee grinder or spice mill; your tea will brew more quickly and evenly.

## **Rooibos - African Red Tea**

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Claimed to help babies with colic also. Serve after birth, as desired.

**Prep Time: 15 minutes**

**Serves 2**

2 t            Rooibos loose tea  
3 c            pure water

1. Bring water to boil and add loose herbs, removing from heat.
2. Cover and steep for a full 10 minutes to get the release of antioxidants.

**Comments and Tips**

This tea is full bodied in color and flavor, though some of us prefer it warmed more with some chai type spices or just ginger, or cooled energetically with licorice, maybe some fresh ginger or fennel.

## Aromatic Vata Lactation Tea

---

This is a delicious and different carminative or digestive tea, and also supports lactation with the ajwan and anise. The taste is more savory and suits vata and kapha more. Serve after childbirth as desired.

**Prep Time: 10 min.**

**Serves 3**

1 quart	pure water
2	bay leaves
1/4 t	anise seed
1/2 t	ajwan
1/4 t	cinnamon powder
1 t	licorice

1. Bring bay leaf and seeds to boil in the quart of pure water.
2. Reduce heat and add powders.
3. Simmer (but do not boil) about 5 - 10 min.

### Comments and Tips

Anise and Ajwan are good encouragement for milk production. With the natural sweetness of licorice, nothing more is needed. Licorice also balances the sharply heating properties of ajwan and anise. Avoid licorice in case of high blood pressure or swelling. Western herbalists say to avoid licorice in pregnancy, although Ayurveda and Chinese herbalists find in good combination and smaller amounts, it is also supportive even during pregnancy.

Recipe from Dr. Sarita Shrestha

## Happy Tummy Tea

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This one was created for my friend Kathy Shellenberger one day. It was a hit taste wise as well as to stop the gas factory. The ingredients are all gentle and a fine postpartum blend, if you wish some variety. Note how the astringent mint and chamomile are balanced. This recipe is better for pittas or summertime use and can include oat straw or licorice also. Fine for pregnancy as well, for pittas especially.

2 parts	fennel seed
2 parts	peppermint
2 parts	chamomile
1 part	ginger powder
1 part	orange peel, dried (4, fresh)
1/4 part	cardamom powder

Blend ingredients and store in airtight jar.

Boil water and toss in 1 teaspoons herbs per cup. Cover, removing from heat, and steep 5 minutes.

## Vata Tea for Kapha and Ama

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This tea is sweet and calming and demonstrates more creative use of Ayurvedic principles. Vata teas for kapha season means that when we feel congestion or heavy dullness, and/or in the cold wet rainy weather when we also have vata influences, something more pungent and drying is called for. Naturally sweet, licorice actually helps loosen phlegm. The brahmi options lift the mind into more peaceful clarity and contentment. Kaphas love their sweet taste, and here is one way to please and balance at the same time. Serve after birth as desired, with more fennel and no licorice with HBP..

**Prep Time: 10-12 min.**

**Serves 4-5**

1.5 quart      pure water  
1/8 - 1/4 t      ground bay leaves  
1/8 - 1/4 t      ajwan seeds  
1/2 t            fennel seeds  
1 t              licorice powder  
1 t              freshly ground cardamom  
1 t              gotu kola, brahmi and/or tulsi powder  
1-2 pinches    clove powder

1. Bring water to boil with bay and ajwan.
2. In a small heavier skillet, dry roast the fennel seeds for extra flavor and benefit. Add (un)toasted fennel to the tea water and reduce heat, simmering covered for 5 minutes.
3. Add the powdered herbs, cover and steep for another 3-5 minutes.

### Comments and Tips

Not only are vata reducing herbs in tea calming, but the Gotu Kola adds its special calming and mild antidepressant, serotonin enhancing support. Safe in combination with SSRI medications.

Toasting the fennel is more kapha reducing. Untoasted fennel is sweeter and not as drying, even though this tea will tend to increase urination a little.

Yet another special brew by Saritaji: Use jasmine flowers, roasted cumin seeds, sage, pinch of ajwan seeds, and optional licorice powder This jasmine variation, because it has sage, is not suitable for any but the most kapha lactating mothers. However, the ingredients make such a delicious and digestively supportive tea, I had to share here.

Recipe from Dr. Sarita Shrestha

## Amadea's Caffeine-Free Chai

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Serve after childbirth as desired.

**Prep Time: 3-5 min.**

**Cooking Time: 15-60 min.**

**Serves 4 (or more)**

3 c              whole milk  
3+ c            pure water  
1                cinnamon stick

5 cardamom pods, crushed a bit and seeds taken out  
1/8 t whole black peppercorns  
1/8 t fennel seeds  
1 t -1 T fresh ginger, grated

1. Bring milk and water to a boil with herb seasonings.
2. Cover, simmer to taste for about 15 -60 minutes.
3. Sweeten at the table with honey, succanat, or agave to taste.

Recipe from Amadea Morningstar , Polarity Therapist, Author *Ayurvedic Cooking for Westerners*

## SWEET NOURISHING SNACKS

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### Rice Pudding (Kheer)

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Whatever your recipe for rice pudding, enjoy it – freshly cooked and served warm. But it is much better to leave out eggs, raisins, and favor a lighter sweetener as the iron rich ones curdle the milk unless stirred in carefully near the end. Serve as desired after childbirth.

**Prep Time: long cooking, stir often.**  
**Serves: about 4, depends on cooking**

**Cook time: 2-4 hours**

1 c rice  
2 c water  
8 c organic milk (un-homogenized if available)  
10 whole cardamom pods  
2 Tbs ghee (clarified butter)  
1 ½ c turbinado sugar (optional)  
¼ c sliced blanched almonds

1. Clean rice well.
2. Cook rice in water on medium high heat until water is almost cooked off and expanded a little.
3. Add milk, cardamom pods and ghee. Bring to boil, then turn down to medium low heat.
4. Stir frequently to prevent burning.
5. continue to cook for 2-4 hours on medium low heat. It should simmer gently.
6. When milk has boiled for a while and the kheer begins to thicken, add turbinado and stir well.
7. When kheer is thick, add the almonds.
8. Enjoy with cinnamon and extra ghee (for mothers).

Recipe adapted from Heidi Nordland, Ayurvedic Practitioner and AyurDoula.

## Saffron Rice Pudding

---

These recipes do not have to be followed exact—anything like this will taste wonderful or be easily adjusted for taste.

**Prep Time: 5 min.**  
**Serves 4-6**

**Cooking Time: 45-90 min.**

1 c	basmati rice, washed well
3 c	pure water or milk
3 c	milk or coconut milk (not low fat)
2/3 c	light raw sugar, or (less) agave to taste
1/3 t	saffron threads, loosely packed
1/2 t	cardamom powder or 1/3 tsp crushed seeds (remove shells)
1/8 t	nutmeg powder (optional)
1/2 t	ginger powder or 1-2 T finely grated fresh ginger
1 t	finely grated lemon zest (optional)
1/4 t	salt

1. Add a little hot water to the saffron to soak in a small bowl and set aside.
2. Bring water and milk to boil in a saucepan first, then add the other ingredients except saffron to the crockpot. Cook for 60-90 minutes or until soft and pudding-like.
3. As a stove top preparation, cook all ingredients about 45 minutes, stirring often, partially covered, on medium low heat.
4. Stir in saffron when done and serve hot.

## Coconut and Ginger Surprise Pudding

---

This dairy free pudding has chewy surprises, which balance the cooling heaviness of coconut milk. Concerning coconut milk, it is fine after childbirth when the digestive fire is clearly re-kindled and mom is not feeling chilled.

1 can	unsweetened coconut milk (or full cream dairy milk)
1/2 can	pure water (coconut milk can)
4 T	arrowroot or kudzu (check quantity)
2-3 T	minced and candied ginger
1/3 c	turbinado, rapadura, or other natural sugar
1-2 T	toasted (or untoasted, for ease) coconut
1, 1/2, 1/4 t	each, vanilla, cinnamon and cardamom
1 t	rose or orange blossom water (optional)
1 pinch	salt

1. Whisk dry ingredients. If you substitute dairy milk, avoid salt.
2. Add milk, sweetener, and chopped candied ginger and whisk again. Stir constantly to avoid lumping or sticking to the bottom over medium heat, 3 - 5 minutes or until fully done thickening.

3. Cool partially, and add flower water or vanilla.
4. Sprinkle with toasted coconut to serve warm.

### **Comments and Tips**

This is especially yummy with maple syrup but can increase vata that way. Agave is delicious also and more warming. For liquid sweeteners reduce the water a similar amount. Remember that a darker sweetener gives a more butterscotch color and flavor.

You can use this later as a frosting, spreading warm to avoid lumping. (Looks prettiest right away and needs to be eaten the same day.)

Arrowroot is best mixed into a paste before whisking into more liquid. Kudzu is very easy but more expensive; simple soak in your liquid to dissolve (dissolves in cool water, it lumps in hot).

## **Sheero, Sheera - Farina Milk Halva**

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Cookbooks offer variations for this nourishing, easy to digest, high-protein and energy snack. We use an extra part liquid. This is best served warm and fresh. Serve after childbirth as desired, as soothing and grounding, bowel softening energy supportive first days nourishment.

**Prep Time: 5 min.**  
**Serves 4**

**Cooking Time: 20 min**

2 c	non-homogenized whole milk or part cream (or part/ all water)
1/4 c	ghee or 1 stick unsalted butter
1/2 c	farina (cream of wheat), coarse-ground semolina flour or cream of rice
1/3-1/2 c	natural sugar (light colored for this recipe)
1 -2 T	sliced almonds, cashews, unsalted pistachios, charole nuts or coconut flakes
1/8 t	cardamom (best results if you use crushed seeds from 3-4 pods)
1/2 t	ginger or more
1/8 t	nutmeg (optional)
1/16 t	saffron, soaked in 1/4 c hot milk or water (optional)
4-6 drops	rosewater or vanilla (optional)

1. Bring milk or water just to a boiling up in a separate pot. Take care not to let it boil over.
2. Melt ghee and add farina in a heavier bottomed pan (wider pot or frying pan works best).
3. Fry slowly on medium, adding ginger powder and stirring frequently. Cook for 5-10 minutes or until it turns golden brown and fragrant. Remove from heat and stir in milk (or water), stirring briskly. A whisk works well at this stage. Return to heat and cook 7 - 10 minutes stirring constantly until fairly thick. This will go more quickly if you have already boiled the milk.
4. Reserving a few nuts for decoration on top, stir in the rest with sugar, cardamom, optional nutmeg, and soaked saffron. Keep turning until well cooked and begins to pull away from sides of the pan, acting like one mass. Turn off heat and add optional rosewater. Now spread in a dish and decorate with saffron (crushed, or soaked and stirred in before serving), flaked almonds, extra cardamom sprinkle. This is oily and won't stick much. Cut into desired shapes (squares, rectangles or diamonds) and serve warm. Warming in ghee to a golden crust for later snack is delicious.

### **Comments and Tips**

When using milk, the lighter sugar usually works best. Dark brown sugars can curdle the milk unless added carefully at the end.

About cream of rice: Eastern Indian shoppers find it as idli rice, Americans find it sometimes next to the cream of wheat or in baby cereal section in supermarkets. Some of us wash, oven dry, then grind white basmati rice in our coffee grinders. The flavor and texture are best with basmati (not cream of brown rice). If there is any tendency to viral infection also, minimize brown rice because of the arginine content.

For kapha or vata add ¼ teaspoon or more of dry ginger powder. Kapha dominant people, or those with congestion, should eat somewhat less of this sweet snack, and can prepare it with a cup or more less liquid, favoring water instead of milk if not nursing or feeling dull or heavy.

You can also make a quick and easy version with fewer spices and nuts. Be sure to boil the milk while warming the farina, and your sheero will thicken up very quickly.

Recipe from MataPrema, Usha Lad, Leelaben Kotecha, Ysha and others

## Stewed Apples, Vitamin C-Enhanced with Cloves

Classical Nepalese Ayurvedics use dried fruits only (more), cooked this way with more water and NO apple for first two weeks or more, and without the salt for 3 days. A satisfying iron- and energy-rich start to your day or light dessert, this also supports the digestive fire and tones the bowels. Use apples or pear only when bowels are loose as the pectin slows diarrhea, or only with stewed dried fruits when constipated.

Prep time: 5-8 minutes      Cook time: 20 - 40 minutes

Serves 2-4

2	apples, cored and quartered (peeled cooks more tender much quicker)
4-6	dried apricots or figs, or 2-4 T raisins or currants (optional)
8	whole cloves
1	small cinnamon stick (optional)
½ c	pure water (more for dried fruits only)
pinch	salt
1-2 t	ghee

1. Peel apples and spear each quarter with a whole clove.
2. Optionally cut larger dried fruits into spoon sizes.
3. Add all ingredients to small saucepan with 1/2 inch or more water.
4. Bring to boil, reduce heat, cover, and simmer until very tender.
5. The longer it cooks, the sweeter the apples will taste!

### **Comments and Tips**

Those who like cream may enjoy instead some coconut milk drizzled over their fruits. Although it is not usually needed, sometimes we just want more creaminess!

Dried fruits help rebuild depleted or taxed muscle tissue.

We all know the benefits of prunes, but they work better when cooked or hydrated; similar benefits come from figs, dates, raisins, and apricots, which are also very high in iron.

Remember to eat grains and stewed fruits separately. Start with the fruits and wait half an hour or more; or have them for a snack, 1 or 2 hours after cereals. This will avoid the discomforts of fermentation for both mother and baby.

According to Dr. Mishra, cooking apples with whole cloves actually increases Vitamin C, which is an unusual feat because cooking usually destroys it. The cloves combine with the quercetin in the apples, which is perhaps their high antioxidant property. The result, he reports, is more Vitamin C than in the raw apple.

Recipe from Dr. Ramakant Mishra with postpartum enhancements. He advises many of his clients (not perinatal) to start the day (after warm water or tea) with stewed apple or pear with clove and without the ghee.

## Stewed Pears - Quick and Easy

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Just the same as cooking apples, though a little quicker. Raw pears or apples may not appeal the first few weeks, being somewhat vata increasing. Cooked get sweeter!

3 pears, peeled and cored  
1/2 c dried figs or other dried iron-rich fruit (optional)  
1 pinch nutmeg

1. Chop dried fruits and add along with pears and nutmeg to small saucepan with 1/2 inch or more water.
2. Bring to boil, reduce heat, cover, and simmer until very tender.

### **Comments and Tips**

A pinch of salt and 1/4 t dried ginger or some freshly grated ginger adds refinement to this simple cleansing and nourishing snack.

Add a little ghee during early postpartum weeks. Like other stewed fruits, this dish serves to keep things moving well, without any drama about it. The nutmeg, usually constipating, as well as the salt, serves to balance for better absorption and perhaps even this pinch is best avoided until bowels are moving well.

## Cardamom Shortbread

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This is one of our favorite recipes for postpartum clients. They are rich, nourishing, and delicious (especially dipped in some hot tea or milk), as well as easy to make and transport. Many cookie recipes, without leavening and with suitable food combining and ingredients, work well also. Serve after 10 days.

**Prep Time: 5 min.                      Cooking time: 25 min.**  
**Serves enough to share and have later again**

1 c	butter
1 c	sweetener
1 t	cardamom powder
1/4 t	nutmeg or ginger powder (or try 1 - 2 t poppy seeds)
1/4 c	milk, nut milk or water (optional)
2 1/2 c	unbleached white flour
1/3 t	salt

1. Set butter out to soften 2 hours in advance.
2. Set oven to 300 degrees. Cream the butter, sugar and spices in a food processor. Add optional liquid.
3. Whisk flour and salt (a fork will do if you don't have a whisk) and blend butter mixture in with the flour by hand.
4. Press evenly into a non-buttered 10 by 14-inch pan or two 9-inch pie pans, about 1/4 inch thick. Prick and score, if you like. Bake at 300F for 20 to 25 minutes. Do not allow the shortbread to brown, or it will harden.
5. Cut before entirely cool into bars or wedges.
6. Store covered, if there are any left.

### Comments and Tips

Often clients can't, won't, or shouldn't eat a particular type of sugar, flour or protein. Apply variations to any recipe by principle.

#### *Fats*

Use high-quality unsalted butter for best results, and leave out salt and add ginger if using a little milk.

You can use sesame, coconut oil or clarified butter for lower cholesterol and still have a very delicious cookie, although it is not quite the same texture and flavor. But don't leave it out, you won't have much left! These buttery cookies are also a wonderful support for winter influences.

#### *Sweeteners*

We favor succanat or turbinado sugar since the sugar molecule is larger and contains trace natural ingredients that make it a gentler and slower impact on the system, including blood sugars. The darker the sugar, the more iron rich it probably is. The wonderful taste is more satisfying as well. (White and brown sugar are processed over charred beef bones, besides hitting the body so hard and fast that blood sugar tends to really spike then crash.)

Fiery body-mind types, and more of us in general in hot weather, may not have quite as much concern over refined sugars, but white sugar is said to increase vata dosha, already the big deal after childbirth. We can also use maple syrup (really delicious) or soaked and pureed dates or date sugar. With moisture, adjust flour up, or add a couple t of egg replacer.

Please don't cook with honey. It is mildly toxic with gradual accumulations in the body over time, according to Ayurvedic medicine.

### *Flours*

We can also substitute a cup of barley, whole wheat, oat, rice, or teff flour as desired with good results. The non-gluten flours (better for those with irritable bowel or gluten intolerance) make a flakier cookie, so it is best to add a good part arrowroot, amaranth, ground flax seed or other binding agent which has been hydrated with a little hot water (¼ c). Using all whole wheat pastry flour is also very delicious. But some of us do even less well with whole wheat than with unbleached!

### *Seasonings*

In wintertime, a little salt really helps balance the coldness of the season and enhance the flavors. Remember that nutmeg helps the colon absorb moisture and can bind, though it is a tasty and calming digestive. Ginger goes very well with wheat flours, and I use clove when using rice. Cardamom is just such a treat, gives a little exotic or Scandinavian sweet flavor. Anise can be used, as well as cinnamon (especially nice with teff or quinoa flour). Many other spices, even black pepper, may be played with.

### *Herbal support*

If you have available ashwaghandha or shatavari, you may choose to add ½ to 1 t to the recipe for support along with seasonings after the first 9-10 days. These Ayurvedic rejuvenative and lactation enhancing herbs are safe extra nourishment for mother and baby taken in combination with the other ingredients (especially spices and butter) and baked in. They digest and absorb much more this way than taken in capsules, although this way the cookies should be enjoyed with hot tea, water or hot milk.

Recipe from Ysha Oakes, D. Ayur, with herbal variations by Amy Uma Sewecki Thompson, CPPAD, Clinical Ayurvedic Practitioner and LMT.

## Sesame Laddu with Shatavari

Laddus are sweets that are prepared in a ball shape. The shatavari herb addition is an optional, excellent lactation support. Serve 10- 21 days after childbirth or more.

**Prep Time: 10 min.**                      **Cooking Time: 10 minutes**  
**Serves about 12 laddus**

2 T                      ghee  
2 c                      white sesame seeds  
2 T                      shatavari (wild asparagus root) powder  
1/2 t                     cardamom powder (or better, hulled whole seeds)  
1/4 t                     nutmeg  
                             honey and/or maple syrup, or thick jaggery syrup (see below)

1. Warm ghee in a heavy skillet with the sesame seeds.
2. Toast them, until golden, adding shatavari when seeds are starting to give their aroma.
3. Cool to warm and grind in an electric coffee grinder, adding the cardamom and nutmeg.
4. Turn into a bowl and blend in with enough sweetener to hold together.
5. When it just holds together, form 1-inch balls and leave set to harden a bit.

### Comments and Tips

This is another high protein treat. Your body type needs and family tastes can dictate choice and amounts of sweetener. Sometimes we add a raw sugar for sweetness, and enough honey to hold together. Other times the honey is enough.

The shatavari is optional, but a wonderful postpartum rejuvenative. It also is a tonic for pitta in general, and along with the sesame tonic for the lungs. (A little fresh grated ginger is a good addition in this case).

Dr. Shrestha boils jaggery, succanat or other raw sugar with just enough water to encourage melting and boiling, cooking with the whole toasted seeds until the mixture turns solid. Extra syrup can be used for other things if you make too much, but use about ½ cup sugar here. When you sauté the seeds in a little ghee or sesame oil, the end result will be less hard than dry roasting. This is a very quick and easy to make version that is mineral and protein-rich and can be made without grinding as well as just 2 or 3 ingredients.

Suitable after the first 2 weeks postpartum, and very nutritious during pregnancy. Avoid sesame with threatened miscarriage as it is mildly increasing downward flowing energies (mild laxative).

## Cardamom Cashew Delights

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Cardamom Delights keep in the refrigerator for up to two weeks but are best eaten within a few days. Enjoy in small quantities after birth as desired.

### Serves 15

2 c	raw cashew nuts (soaked in 2 c fresh water for 2 hours or overnight)
14	large dates (soaked for 30 min. in bowl of warm water)
¼ c	gojji berries (soaked for 30 min. in warm water)
1-2 T	cardamom pods
½ c	raw cashew nuts, finely chopped

1. Crack cardamom pods and take out black cardamom seeds. Place in mortar and pestle or coffee grinder and grind into fine powder. Alternatively, you can use already ground cardamom but since it is an aromatic spice that contains volatile oils, it is more potent and more fragrant freshly ground.
2. Drain soaked nuts and process in a food processor to a fine crumble and set aside. Drain dates and gojji berries, and puree them with the freshly ground cardamom in the food processor into a smooth puree. Blend in the nut crumble.
3. You should have a coarse batter that is moist but not too wet. If it seems too wet to roll into balls, add some finely shredded coconut.
4. Form small balls and roll in the remaining ½ cup of chopped nuts.

Recipe from Ulli Allmendinger, MSc Ayurveda and author of *Sattva—Ayurvedic Energy Snacks for Body and Soul*

## Saffron Cream Cheese or Nut Butter

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This spread or dip is just so yummy and a hit with every client (or friend!) we serve it to. It also is not as heavy to digest as cream cheese or nut butter. Surprise ingredient? Lots of Flax oil, and like my 92 year-old mother (who has no idea about flax oil) says, this is better than ice cream. As snack or dessert spread these give grounding and lasting energy. Serve After 15-20 days postpartum with hot herbal tea.

**Prep Time: 5 min**

**Serves 5-10 (12 oz., which stuffs 20 medjools or more generously)**

1 package	organic cream cheese, Neufchatel, or nut butter
3 T	lignan rich flax oil
1-2 T	liquid raw honey
¼ t	saffron threads
½ t	vanilla
¼ t	ginger powder
1/8 t	cardamom powder
5 drops	organic lemon essential oil or 1- 2 t finely minced zest (optional)

20-25          dates, cut into halves and seeded (medjools or Arizona blacks are great)

1. Let cream cheese soften at room temperature.
2. Puree all ingredients together in small food processor.
3. Generously stuff dates with it, or enjoy the dip by itself.
4. Serve with a little herbal tea.

### Comments and Tips

Substitute a nut butter for the cream cheese, and leave out the lemon oil/zest and saffron, adding ginger or nutmeg instead for possibly just as yummy a sauce, dip or spread.

Instead of stuffing dates, you can also spread it on chapatti or warmed manna bread. Water thin for a thinner sauce.

Keeps well several days, refrigerated, if you don't add water or heat, and if you don't end up sharing it.

If your flax oil doesn't look brown, add a tsp of ground seeds for the lignans if you can. Something rather magical happens with dairy proteins and these lignans. Neufchatel has just a little protein; the cream cheese really doesn't have much at all but it is enough to make the difference with the flax oil.

Adjust sweetness to taste. 2 T honey makes it sweet enough for a cheesecake topping, 1-1 ½ to stuff medjool dates ...optional with sprinkle of cardamom, nutmeg, or your Almond Herbal postpartum snack for an ojas enhancing snack. Remember, honey is one of those things that helps cut phlegm producing-properties, as is the combination of flax lignans and dairy, the lemon, ginger and cardamom. However, please avoid this treat if you are sick and very congested. Please remember to avoid using pasteurized honey.

The saffron color and flavor will come out after sitting for 10 minutes or more in the mixture, giving lovely streaks and exotic health promoting taste.

## MENUS

These menus feature mostly Ayurvedic Postpartum cooking, which is a time of especially weak digestion and excess Vata. Choose your menu in terms of appropriate agni and other factors, referring to the section called "Cooking by Weeks Postpartum" at the beginning of this cookbook.

Many menu ideas are here for you to create with by the principles up front of this book. Following the principles, you can take cultural favorites and adapt many for suitable postpartum fare. Please remember good food combining, which you will find explained in a simple, clear online resource collection at [http://www.ayurveda.com/online\\_resource/index.html](http://www.ayurveda.com/online_resource/index.html). Enjoy!

### Before the birth

Shop food and culinary herbal staples and explore cooking with any new recipes for fruits, veggies, legumes, grains, spices  
Make 2 quarts ghee (4 lbs, make in 2 batches so you know what you are doing)  
Make panchaloka type herbalized ghee  
Order massage oil (sesame probably) and dashmool  
Order or make almond herbal snack  
Make massage oil  
Make fennel digestive herbs  
Make up jar of fennel-fenugreek (sweetwater lactation tea)

### First Days

Immediate Postpartum Oleation – warm Spiced Ghee, 1-2 Tbs.

When appetite is up, take hot mushy or brothy nourishing delicious oily sweet foods such as -

Hot Konji with generous ghee, agni enhancing spices and iron rich sugar – up to 5 X a day and Hot boiled milk, as much as desired, with tsp ghee

Raab up to 2-3 cups a day as desired

#### SPECIAL TEAS:

Strong Fenugreek tea 2-3 cups a day for few days

Dashmool tea ¼ cup twice daily for 42 days, am and pm  
Sweetwater lactation tea 2 quarts daily for 42 days or more

### Early morning or snacks

First day's konji or steamed rice with ghee, spices and dark sugar  
Stewed apple with clove snack  
Boiled milk/nut milk options for chai  
Soaked or toasted nuts or seeds  
Baked gingered pear for snack

#### GOOD VARIETY WHEN READY

Hot spiced apple juice or stewed iron rich fruits as desired (not with milk or vegetable/legume/grain dishes)  
Eggless grain puddings  
Sheero  
Mung or other small lentil broth or thin soups, well spiced  
Vegetable broth  
Garlic Chutney daily or twice daily  
Mother's Basic Rice consider serving with 1-3 Tbs hot ghee and generous dark sugar/syrup, and agni enhancing spices. Cinnamon may be added also.

Non-vegetarians – 24 hour chicken soup (boil whole chicken and turn down to long simmer, with generous garlic and other seasonings)

## Breakfast Ideas

### CONDIMENTS:

Western Panchaloka, in honey or ghee  
Molasses or jaggary, succanat, honey - iron rich and/or plegm reducing  
turmeric, clove, spices etc - agni supportive, antihistamine  
Vata Tea for Kapha and Ama  
Fresh fruit snacks or soaked dried fruits, for later  
see nut milk and tea options

### MENU IDEAS

Mother's First Days Konji  
Hot boiled milk

Thin cream of wheat or rice  
Cooked in part milk, spiced, well oiled  
Opt. dates or dark iron rich sugar  
Opt. toasted or soaked nuts

Steamed Rice (extra water) with spices, sweet molasses & ghee  
Hot spiced milk or nut milk

Quinoa with cardamom, fennel seeds; cinnamon (sonya's recipe)  
Rooibos "chai" with boiled milk or almond milk  
Walnuts

Steel cut oats, cinnamon, ginger – cook 45 min. later add amaranth, cardamom  
Triple boiled Hot (spiced) milk Tonic  
Soaked date bits – 1-2 T/person  
Sweetwater lactation tea

Thin Cream of Semolina, not whole wheat today.

Energizing Date and Almond Shake  
Tulsi-licorice spice tea, green opts  
Cream of ground brown rice cereal  
Toasted white sesame seed garnish

Gingered oatmeal  
Toasted sunflower seeds

Rooibos or Amadea's "chai"

Coconut khir with basmati  
Soaked cashews  
(or later, pumpkin seed horchata)

### BREAKFAST MENUS - KAPHA-VATA

Barley+/or amaranth, ginger/clove, choice sesame oil or butter  
Infant "formula" (cow's milk)

Barley cereal/ginger/clove/amaranth  
Infant "formula" (cow's milk)

(opt fruit salad with ginger, pinch salt or fresh fruit for later snack; ie, don't eat with the grains in a meal)

### BREAKFAST OR MAIN MEAL MENUS

Khichadi  
Raab (warm beverage)  
Sunflower seeds toasted - add salt/oil after toasting  
CCF tea

Upma with vegetables  
Lassi, or Tahini milk with maple syrup

Stir fried ricotta or panir with turmeric, vegetables (later)  
garlic chutney  
Chapatti or Oatmeal (no milk)

## Main Meal Menu Ideas

### CONDIMENTS

Extra ghee or oil for thee, Mom  
Fennel digestive chewing herbs  
Garlic Chutney, Pippali in aloe gel or panchaloka rice  
Tulsi or lime marinade dressing  
Fresh squeeze of lime or lemon  
Simple fresh ginger "pickle"  
Add small amount natural sugar to soups, veggies  
Sub coconut milk for cream  
Herb teas or room temp water  
Cilantro chutney w. avocado (later)  
Cayenne rather than chilies

### MENU IDEAS

Simple kitchadi  
Garlic chutney  
Sweetwater lactation tea

Soft Kitchadi with dates, almonds or cashews, cardamom, saffron

Baked yam, baked beet, sauted asparagus or spinach, pecans, ghee  
Garlic chutney

Aparna's dahl (first week) or Spinach Mung Dhal (about 2-3 weeks)  
Basic Mother' Basmati Rice (2-3 days)  
Abundantly dilled carrots (just carrots and dill or meth for weeks 1-2; chard about 2-3 weeks)  
Garlic Chutney  
Flaxed lassi (7-10 days)  
Herbed chapatti (2 weeks, start small)

Thin Dhal with cilantro  
Mother's Rice, or Chapatti after 10 day  
Sweet Carrot Curry  
Garlic chutney  
Cebada

Asparagus khichadi (mushy 1<sup>st</sup> week+)

Grounding Glazed Carrots with ginger and thyme

Garlic chutney  
Takram lassi (after a week or more)  
chapatti (for other family members)  
First Days' Congee  
Rooibos tea with ginger

Masala Mung Soup  
Winter squash baked with  
Sweet Black or Red rice  
Ulli's Turkish Zucchini with olive oil and rice

Arame (or hiziki)-carrot-zucchini(green vegetable) w. cumin, garlic/ginger  
Golden Threads (bean thread or rice) in toasted sesame oil, basil & turmeric  
Tamarind, star anise and red lentil soup  
Ginger-lime digestive  
Gomasio

### A LIGHT MEAL

Tapioca Kichari with sautéed Japanese broccoli, Cilantro, garlic-caraway-lemon zest  
Thin lentil soup

### WHEN READY, 10-15 DAYS +

Carrot & Greens Kitchadi  
Baked beets, sliced and sauté-seasoned  
Lime vinaigrette (2-3 weeks)

Almond – date Kitchari  
Garlic chutney  
Kale with Parsnip, Coconut Milk & Lime  
Strong Fennel Fenugreek Tea  
Panchaloka rice

Baked Yams  
Fresh dilled Tarator sauce with garlic  
Baked beets ginger sautéed with greens  
Coconut milk tapioca pudding

Azuki sweet and sour soup  
Toasted sesame oil baked yam  
Panchaloka rice Gomasio  
Asparagus stir fry

Sweet Rice with saffron  
Split mung soup  
Savory lassi  
Okra or asparagus in yellow mustard seed,  
ginger & lemon

Methi Vegetable Soup  
Quinoa  
Roasted yams with Tarator Sauce

Nori rolls with avo, steamed carrot, grated  
ginger, amaranth rice  
Tahini sauce –lime, sweet, roasted garlic  
Squash with cilantro and cayenne

Red Lentil Soup, or Flaxed Cheese sauce  
(after about 3 weeks)  
Mother's Basic Rice  
Okra with Methi, garlic, cumin stir fried  
Chapatti half or sol

#### **AFTER 2-3 WEEKS**

Mung Soup with Winter Squash and hint of  
Wild Rice  
Sweet Moist White Bryani with Asparagus,  
and Bits of Red Bell, Almond  
Methi Raita

Saffron Coconut Stew  
Roasted grain dish or chapatti  
Marinated beets - Bake oiled, in peels about  
45 minutes (till tender) or steam; Cool to  
skin/slice  
Lime vinaigrette with dry ginger

Pumpkin Soup or dhal, Cayenne  
Fresh unleavened bread  
Flaxed cheese or use thicker lentil sauce  
with bread (after 2-3 weeks),

Urid dhal, curried & cilantro/fresh ginger  
Stuffed Avocado halves with lemon cous  
cous, garlic chutney, basil; opt add FF seeds  
from tea  
Sautéed summer squash & beet stems with  
Hing and Dill

Pasta with roasted sesame oil, hing, basil or  
anise  
Azuki beans soaked/long cooked into moist  
pate  
Marinated in Lime, tamarind, Dill & garlic  
Garnish with seasoned/sautéed beet, carrot,  
fresh cilantro  
Coconut Cream pudding

Tarragon - Lemon - Ginger mung stew or  
panir (~3 weeks) with  
Garlic sautéed Swiss Chard  
Squash baked with pumpkin pie spice, dates  
& ghee  
Couscous with Sesame or Olive oil, Mint,  
Caraway or Fennel Seeds Unleavened  
Thumbprint Jam Shortbread

#### **AFTER 3-4 WEEKS**

Sprouted mung loaf  
Cashew herbed gravy  
Sweet lassi  
Wild laced rice stuffing  
Steamed red chard with lime and ginger  
Simple fresh ginger "pickle" option  
Aromatic Vata Lactation Tea

Spinach pasta with roasted garlic, nutmeg  
and fennel  
Italian Ricotta sauce (sauté herbs and  
spices in olive oil with lemon zest)  
Avocado slices, toasted cumin, salt, lime  
Herbed Tea  
Mother's shortbread

Sweet 'n Sour Azuki Soup  
Baked winter squash or yam  
Sea Vegetable complement or garlic bok  
choy, garlic chutney  
Emerald Relish (parsley) (5+ weeks)  
Nut Butter Stuffed dates

#### **MEAT DISH**

Chicken soup with Fresh Fennel, Ginger,  
Carrot, Garlic, Nutmeg, rice, S&P  
Chapatti or Manna Bread

#### **AFTER ABOUT 4 WEEKS**

Sauteed Panir & Carrots in Gingered Brown Sauce  
Steamed Greens w lime, oil & nutmeg  
Fettuchinni noodles with olive oil, basil, salt & pepper

Mock Thai Anise or Basil Coconut sauce  
Boiled tofu with hing  
or Toasted chopped almonds  
Oriental rice noodles  
Saute with bok choy, zucchini, carrot, garlic, greens, lemon zest, cumin and touch of red bells

Tarragon-Rosemary-Thyme-Lemon-Turmeric-seasoned Paneer with garlic sautéed Spinach or Chard  
Baked Squash with cinnamon, dates & butter  
Couscous with Sesame or Olive oil, Mint, Caraway or Fennel Seeds  
Unleavened Thumbprint Jam Shortbread

#### **AFTER 5TH WEEK**

White tipped sprouted rosemary lentils  
Gourmet Guacomole  
Fresh Tortillas  
Sauteed okra  
Sweet flaxed yoghurt (lassi)  
Optional Papaya with lime

White or golden oil sautéed paneer  
Rice fetuccine, with olive oil/ salt Caroline's Red Sauce (no garlic versio  
Kale with Cumin and garlic  
Cardamom Shortbread  
Happy Tummy herb tea

Spinach or Kale/Greens Lasagne with Herb Nut Gravy & Ricotta  
Emeralds in Ruby Soup (Zuchinni-Beet-garlic)  
Coconut chutney

## **Nourishing Snack Ideas**

Almond Date Energizing Shake  
Shortbread Cookies and Hot spiced milk  
Sheero and Masala Chai Tea  
Konji and Boiled Milk  
Baked rice pudding and Gingered Tea  
Sheero and Tulsi- Tea  
Almond Herbal Rejuv Snack and Sweetwater Lactation Tea  
Sesame laddu, Shatavari w. hot milk  
Saffron Cream Cheese Stuffed dates and Rooibos Spiced Tea  
Eggless Pumpkin pudding and Tulsi Tea  
Dates stuffed with nut butter, Cebada or Rice Milk  
Pumpkin Chai  
Mother's Guacomole in warm Tortilla, Warm Pumpkin horchata  
Soaked black figs, prunes, etc with a few blanched almonds or soaked brazils  
Sweet fresh fruits  
Hot spiced stewed fruit with opt splash of coconut milk or almond herbal snack  
Curried Sunflower or Pumpkin Seeds  
Cinnamon – ginger Baked Pears sprinkled with almond herbal snack  
Stewed dates with Pepper, cardamom & ghee in a Butter Warmed Whole Wheat Tortilla  
Flax Oil-Cottage or ricotta cheese spread on manna bread or warm chappati  
Avocado with squeeze of lime, salt & pepper. Chapatti!  
Hot soup with warm ghee gingered chapatti  
Whipped Cream with Honey, cardamom & vanilla instead of Ice Cream

## Celebrating!

Soaked cashews "Nog"  
Peppermint Rooibos Chai  
Eggless Pumpkin pudding  
Pumpkin Cookies  
Candied Pecans  
Hot spiced Pomegranite-apple juice

### **VATA'S MEXICAN DINNER**

Mother's puree of hing-cumin-thyme-  
cayenne black bean soup  
Mother's gourmet guacamole  
Fresh flour tortillas  
Dilled Zucchini stir fry with carrots  
Hot garlic herbed ricotta  
Optional paprika rice (cook with olive oil,  
hing, paprika, oregano/thyme, salt)  
Ginger/Hibiscus/mint type tea

### **THANKSGIVING FEAST**

Steamed Carrot-Mung Loaf  
Coconut Mint Bechamel sauce  
Mother's Rice w. cinnamon, cardamom  
Butternut Squash Soup  
Red-Green & Gold Stir Fry  
Emerald Chutney with Avocado and  
parsley  
Pomegranite-date-orange zest & spiced  
chutney

## INDEX

So – this version isn't paged, but the thought is maybe you can use it anyway, so here you are.

Abundantly dilled carrots/chard...

Almond milk, Fresh.....

Amadea's Caffiene Free Chai.....

Amaranth Cereal

Apples, Stewed Vit C rich w/ Cloves

Asparagus Khichadi

Azuki Sweet 'n Sour Soup

Baked & marinated beets

Baked Yam

Barley Milk Cebada

Basic Mother' Basmati Rice

Basic tea recipe

Black Pepper Ghee, First Days

Bread, Chapatti

Bread, Mana

### BREAKFAST MENUS

Cardamom Shortbread

Caroline's Red Pasta Sauce

Cashew or basic creamy gravy

CCF tea

Cebada – Warm Barley Drink

Chai, Amadea's Caffienne Free

Chapatti, tortilla

Chutney, Fresh Cilantro Coconut

Chutney, Garlic

Cheese, Paneer

Coconut khir with basmati

Coconut Stew, Saffron

### CONDIMENT, RELISH, GHEE

Cottage Cheese, Flaxed/Curried

Cream of Basmati Rice Porridge

Cream of brown rice side Porridge

Cream of Semolina Porridge

Dahl

Dairy

Dashamool Decoction - 40 days

Date and Almond Shake, Energizing

Emerald Relish (parseley)

Energizing Date and Almond Shake

Fenugreek tea (strong)

First Day Black Pepper Ghee

First Days' Rice Konji

Flaxed and Curried Cottage Cheese

Flaxed Sweet Lassi

### FOODS BY WEEKS POSTP

Ginger , Sattvic Fresh "Pickle"

Garlic Chutney

Ghee Making - Crock-pot Method

Ghee, First Day Black Pepper

### GRAINS

Gourmet Mother's Guacamole in 5

Guacomole

Grounding Glazed Vegetables

Halvas

Infant "formula" (cow's milk)

Herbed chapatti

### HERB TEAS

Horchata de Arroz (Rice)

Horchata, Pumpkin or Sunflower

Hot spiced milk tonic

Kale with Roasted Sesame Oil

Khichadi

Khichadi, Asparagus

Khir, Coconut

Lactation - Aromatic Vata Tea

Lactation – Sweetwater Tea

Lassi

Licorice herb tea

Lime "vinagrette"

### LUNCH/MAIN MEAL MENUS

### MENUS

Milk Formula, for Babies

Milk Tonic, Hot Spiced  
Mint relish/emerald chutney  
Mother's gourmet guacomole  
Mung Loaf, Sprouted

Nut and Seed Milks, Dairy Free  
Oatmeal – Toasted Ginger  
Panchaloka variations  
Paneer - Indian Fresh Cheese  
Pasta Red Sauce, Caroline's  
Pears Stewed - Quick and Easy  
"Pickle" of Ginger , Sattvic Fresh  
Pippali in aloe gel  
Poor woman's gold rice  
Porridge for Mothers w/ Variations

#### PROTEINS

Pudding - First Days'  
Pumpkin Seed Horchata

Raab – First Days Beverage  
Relish, Emerald  
Rice Milk, homemade  
Rooibos Tea - African Red

Saffron Coconut Stew  
Saffron Cream Cheese Spread  
Sauce, Tarator (tahini)  
Savory Halvas  
Sesame Laddu with Shatavari  
Sheero, Sheera - Farina Milk Halva

#### SHOP/COOK-FAVOR/AVOID

Simple ginger "pickle" 36-37  
Simple Lime Vinagrette  
Soup, Aparna's dahl

Soup, Azuki Sweet 'n Sour  
Chard & Dill Ideas  
Spices  
Sprouted Mung Loaf  
Stew, Saffron Coconut  
Stewed apple with clove  
Stewed pears  
Sunflower Seed Horchata  
( )Sweet 'n Sour Azuki Soup  
Sweet water lactation tea

#### SWEET NOURISHING SNACKS

Tahini Milk, Simple maple  
Takram – Simple Digestive Lassi  
Tarator Sauce (Middle East)  
TEAS, Herbal Teas for 2  
Tea, Aromatic Vata Lactation  
Tea, Basic Herb recipe  
Tea, CCF  
Tea, Fenugreek  
Tea, Tulsi-Licorice Spice  
Tea, Sweet Water Lactation

Toasted Ginger Oatmeal  
Tortillas/Chapatti  
Triple boiled milk  
Tulsi-Licorice Spice tea  
Upma - Farina with Vegetables  
Vata Lactation Tea  
Vata Tea for Kapha and Ama  
Vata Tea with Cumin

#### VEGETABLES

"Vinaigrette", Simple Lime

Mommie's Tummy is available by e-download and sometimes in hardcopy print. As we work to get the fuller collection available this offers more than enough ideas for the creative cook to provide delicious variety. Permission to copy a few recipes for mothers to share with mothers is granted with the request you kindly include the copyright contact information.

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