

Welcome to WIC

Healthy Foods and Helpful Advice
That's What WIC Is All About



Welcome to WIC

You are one of many women, infants and children on the WIC Program. WIC serves pregnant, breastfeeding and postpartum women, infants and children up to five years of age who meet the financial, nutritional and residency requirements of the program.

WIC provides, at not cost to you:

- ◆ Nutritious foods to supplement your diet
- ◆ Nutrition counseling
- ◆ Referrals for other health care services

How long can I stay on WIC?

Pregnant Women – during pregnancy and up to six weeks after giving birth

Breastfeeding Mothers – one year after giving birth

Mothers who are not breastfeeding – six months after giving birth

Children – until the fifth birthday

How can WIC help you?

WIC works best when everyone works together – you, the health clinic, and the WIC Food Center. Nutrition education is an important benefit offered to you by the WIC program, and federal guidelines require that two nutrition contacts be provided during each six month certification period. Take advantage of the learning opportunities provided through WIC. Your education contacts may be individual or part of a group education class.

WIC can work best for you if you:

- ◆ Keep your appointments. If you can't keep an appointment, please call your local WIC office to reschedule.
- ◆ Take your WIC receipt and an ID with you when you go to pick up your WIC food package. If an authorized proxy will be picking up your food package, be sure they have your WIC receipt and an ID.
- ◆ Pick up your supplemental food package every month.
- ◆ Use your WIC foods for the eligible applicant.
- ◆ Provide accurate information such as address and phone number.
- ◆ Notify your local WIC clinic if you plan to move so your benefits can be transferred to your new location.

WIC applicants should know:

- ◆ It is illegal to participate in the WIC Program in more than one location at any given time.
- ◆ WIC foods should not be sold, traded or given away.

What is provided in your WIC food package?

WIC is a supplemental food program and it will not provide for all of your food and nutrient needs. Foods provided through WIC are a good source of important nutrients needed in a healthy diet. Your WIC Food Centers will have a variety of food items to select from in each food category (i.e. cereals, juices, cheeses, fruits, vegetables). Ask your Food Center staff for assistance in making food selections that your family will enjoy.

Food packages for women and children include:

Milk	Peanut Butter or Dried Beans/Peas
Cheese	Whole Wheat Bread or Alternative (not included in non-breastfeeding package)
Eggs (liquid or dry)	Fresh or Canned Fruits and Vegetables
100% Fruit Juice	Canned Tuna (exclusively breastfeeding pkg. only)
Iron Fortified Cereal	

Food packages for infants include:

Iron Fortified Formula
Iron Fortified Infant Cereal (added at 6 months)
Infant Fruits and Vegetables (added at 6 months)
Infant Meats (Exclusively breastfeeding infant only)

Breastfeeding

WIC provides a special breastfeeding education and support program to help you make informed choices about how to feed your baby. This program includes:

- ◆ Up to date information on breastfeeding
- ◆ Prenatal classes and support groups
- ◆ Peer counselors
- ◆ Consultation with a lactation specialist

The WIC food package for exclusively breastfeeding women includes additional amounts of tuna, milk, eggs, juice, fruits and vegetables. Infants that are exclusively breastfed receive baby food meats as well as twice the amount of infant fruits and vegetables provided to formula fed infants.

Alcohol, tobacco and other drugs

When you are pregnant, alcohol, tobacco and other drugs can harm your unborn baby. If you need help to stop using any of these, talk to your WIC nutritionist, health care provider, or social worker. They will know where you can go for help.

Fair hearing

You have the right to appeal any decision about your eligibility or qualification in the WIC program. If you are not satisfied with the decision of your local clinic or Food Center, you may request either orally or in writing a fair hearing. Request for fair hearings must come within 60 calendar days of the decision. A hearing will follow within one week of the request. Everyone involved will discuss and review the case. You may hire legal counsel to represent you at your expense. You will get a decision in writing within 45 days of the original request. If you are still unhappy with the decision, you may take the case to court at your expense.

Where to get more help

Contact your local county health department about:

- ◆ **Community programs** — These might include substance treatment centers, food banks, and food networks.
- ◆ **Health care** — In some areas, community health centers and migrant health centers offer free or low cost health and dental care. If you do earn money, you might pay a little for these services. Each state has a program that pays medical costs for people with low incomes.
- ◆ **Medicaid** — Through a national health care program, Medicaid helps people with low incomes pay for medical services. Pregnant women can get doctor visits before and after the baby is born, hospitalization, delivery, prescription drugs and immunizations. In some cases, Medicaid will cover older children.

Contact your social services agency about:

- ◆ **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)** — This service provides assistance for needy families with children up to age 18 years.
- ◆ **Child Support** — this service provides money to children from the parent assigned responsibility by legal services.
- ◆ **Food Stamp program** — This helps families buy foods they need for good health.

If you are planning to move, please let your WIC nutritionist know. The nutritionist will give you information to take with you to assure that you continue to receive your WIC food package.

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