

# Counseling Guide Postpartum Women

*Health Outcome: Achieves optimal health during the childbearing years and reduces the risk of chronic diseases.*

Suggested Open Ended Questions	Suggest Affirming Statements	Suggested Nutrition Education Statements
<p><b>Meal Pattern:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell me about the meals and snacks you eat.</li> <li>• How do you feel about families eating meals together?</li> <li>• What types of restaurants do you select when eating out?</li> <li>• What concerns do you have about your eating habits?</li> </ul> <p><b>Eating Habits:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are some foods that you think you don't eat enough of?</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell me about your special diet.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell me about the food cravings you have been experiencing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Beverages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you drink on most days?</li> </ul> <p><b>Supplements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What vitamins, minerals, or herbal supplements do you take?</li> <li>• What do you know about folic acid?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It's common for amounts eaten to vary from meal to meal and day to day.</li> <li>• It can be challenging getting the entire family together for dinner.</li> <li>• Fast food restaurants can really be convenient when you have a busy schedule.</li> <li>• You've tried to do _____ before and it has not worked for you.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eating a balance diet can be challenging for many of us.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It sounds like you have a good understanding of your special diet.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some moms continue to have cravings after delivery.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It's difficult for many women to drink enough fluids each day.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some women find it hard to make the time to take their vitamins.</li> <li>• Adequate vitamin and mineral intake can be challenging for most of us.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Discuss:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some days food intake will be better than others, and that she should strive to eat to the best of her ability on most days.</li> <li>• The importance of consuming regular meals and snacks, which leads to a diet that is sufficient in calories and essential nutrients.</li> <li>• Selecting healthy food choices when eating out.</li> </ul> <p>See NTM Section 3.3.1</p> <p><b>Encourage:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intake of high biologic quality protein which includes meats, poultry, fish, eggs and milk. Dried beans, peas and peanut butter are also good protein sources.</li> </ul> <p>See NTM Sections 3.3.2 and 3.4.3 and 2</p> <p><b>Encourage:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The avoidance of a strict vegan diet, because it may result in nutrient deficiencies. Nutrients of potential concern are riboflavin, iron, zinc, B<sub>12</sub>, vitamin D, calcium and selenium.</li> </ul> <p>See NTM Section 3.4.2</p> <p><b>Discuss:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food items, which could satisfy the craving for the non-food item.</li> <li>• Have her speak to her physician if the cravings persist.</li> </ul> <p>See NTM Section 3.4.1</p> <p><b>Encourage:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Her to drink to thirst and consume fluids with meals.</li> <li>• Alternative products for individuals who avoid all milk products.</li> </ul> <p>See NTM Section 3.7.2</p> <p><b>Encourage:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Her to continue taking her prenatal vitamins until the supply is gone.</li> <li>• Refer to health care provider if excessive intake of supplements is noted.</li> </ul> <p>See NTM Section 3.7.4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase consumption of dark green vegetables, oranges and enriched breads, pasta, crackers and cereal.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Postpartum Care and Counseling</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What has your doctor told you about family planning?</li> <li>• How have you been feeling since the delivery of your baby?</li> <li>• How did your delivery go?</li> </ul> <p><b>Weight</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you think about your weight since delivery?</li> </ul> <p><b>Low Iron</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What foods do you think are high in iron?</li> </ul> <p><b>Substance Abuse</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What have you heard about the effects of smoking and second hand smoke?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is a decision only you can make.</li> <li>• After having a baby, many women have changes in their moods.</li> <li>• It sounds like it was a wonderful experience.</li> <li>• Most women are anxious to return to their pre-pregnancy weight.</li> <li>• Sounds like you have a good understanding of foods high in iron.</li> <li>• A number of women feel the same way about smoking.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Encourage:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To keep future appointments and talk with her partner.</li> <li>• To ask her partner, friends or family for help.</li> <li>• To eat regular meals and snacks.</li> <li>• To get plenty of rest.</li> <li>• To join a new mother’s group.</li> <li>• If cesarean delivery – explain that gas production and constipation are common.</li> <li>• Physical activity.</li> <li>• Eating small amounts of food to help alleviate gas.</li> </ul> <p>See NTM Section 3.7</p> <p><b>Discuss:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slow and gradual weight loss.</li> <li>• The importance of limiting juice, sugar drinks, soda, sweets and fatty foods.</li> <li>• Encourage regular physical activity.</li> </ul> <p>See NTM Section 3.7.3</p> <p><b>Discuss:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Including iron-rich foods such as meat, fish, poultry and WIC cereals.</li> <li>• <b>Consume some citrus fruits and vegetables to assist with iron absorption.</b></li> <li>• If she reports taking iron supplements, determine if physician directed. If not, refer to the physician.</li> </ul> <p>See NTM Section 3.3.2 and 3.7</p> <p><b>Encourage:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner, friends and family to smoke outside the home.</li> <li>• Avoid smoking in the car or other confined locations.</li> <li>• Refer to smoking cessation programs.</li> </ul> <p>See NTM Section 3.6.1</p>

**Suggested Participant Resources:** #997 Why Snack, #996 Family Meals – FAST, Healthful, #999 Why Breakfast