A top-down view of a white ceramic cup filled with a thick, golden-brown soup, sitting on a white surface. To its right is a white ceramic bowl with a blue and white patterned rim, filled with a vibrant yellow curry. The curry contains chunks of chicken, mango, and fresh green herbs. Scattered around the dishes are fresh green herbs, including basil and cilantro, and a piece of ginger root. The background is a light, neutral color.

# 7 Misconceptions of Postpartum Nutrition

How it's a Leading Cause of the Postpartum Depression  
Epidemic and the Rise of Autoimmune Diseases



Maranda Bower,  
Postpartum Bliss Coach



Hello!  
I'm Maranda.

Thank you so much for downloading this information. I know that it will be incredibly helpful to you!

**Maranda Bower is a Postpartum Bliss Coach who's supporting you in experiencing deep authentic healing, while preventing postpartum depression and anxiety. As an author and speaker, she's worked with hundreds of mothers, awakening them into the joyful and fulfilling Sacred Window that is postpartum. She lives on her beautiful homestead in Alaska with her husband and 3 children.**

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# Blissful Postpartum



When a mama feels abundantly prepared for postpartum, many exceptional things happen. I witness time and time again, mothers experiencing shorter healing times, no matter what kind of birth she experienced. When mama is implementing a plan that supports optimal rest, relaxation, and healing, she's calmer and more relaxed. Which translates to calmer babies, minimal hormone unease, and little to no depression or anxiety.

For a deeper and more thorough understanding of your personal postpartum needs, you can apply to work with me one-on-one. Connect with your baby and your highest self, all while helping you prepare for a blissful postpartum.

Apply here: <https://marandabower.typeform.com/to/fwU3Jl>



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# 7 Biggest Misconceptions of Postpartum Nutrition

And How it's a Leading Cause of the Postpartum Depression Epidemic and the Rise of Autoimmune Diseases

Our modern world has failed to understand how radically unique the postpartum body is that we are on the verge of destroying the very mothers this time transforms. In our busy life, we take great pride in being able to return to the normalcy of life before baby as if having a child didn't change a thing. In reality, growing a life within changes us mothers so deeply, that even the very cells in our body are forever altered.

In pregnancy, much has been done to understand nutrition and the best way to support our growing baby. The science and wisdom for postpartum however, has been practically dismissed. Worse is that it's assumed that one should simply continue eating as they had done before pregnancy, or better yet, as they had done during pregnancy. Nothing is further from the truth.

In fact, eating in postpartum is counter-intuitive to everything you are being told right now. When you look at the symptoms of postpartum moms and the significant amount of discomforts they experience, one has to ask the question "is this supposed to be difficult or is there a far better way?"

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# Of Massive Concern

In looking deeper into what postpartum mothers often experience, we see over 30% of moms go through depression. That doesn't include the women who keep silent or don't know they are in the fog until it lifts. This statistic doesn't account for postpartum anxiety, postpartum bi-polar, psychosis, OCD, or any other mental health challenges that develops post birth. These mental health disruptions effect how we raise our baby, interact with our partner and the world around us, how we handle stress, and so much more. The effects are serious that it leaves lasting impressions. And with rates in our culture soaring so high, it's a wonder why it hasn't been called a national epidemic.

Of further concern, and one of the more serious postpartum epidemics, is that of autoimmune diseases. Women are at a significant risk for getting a serious life-altering disease, where her own body attacks itself, after having given birth. One study connected having a cesarean to a 30% increased risk for developing an autoimmune disease within the first few years after having a child. Not only are these life altering, they are downright difficult, expensive, and life-threatening (autoimmune disease means a much greater risk of developing cancer as well). Surprisingly, much of this is can be tied directly to the way we nourish (or don't nourish) our body in postpartum.

To understand why this is happening, it's critical that you fully understand the seven key misconceptions of postpartum nutrition. When you fully comprehend these ideas as the false information they are, you can begin the process of healing your postpartum deeply, while protecting the body from disease and mental health challenges.

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1. It's okay to eat "cold" foods, especially nutrient rich smoothies...

FALSE.

When we go to the doctor for a massive wound and are put in recovery, the protocol is NOT to put ice or cold on it but the complete opposite. Let the healing wound be warm and dry, which stimulates proper blood flow that brings vital nutrients and clotting to the wound for healing. In postpartum, the "wound" is practically your entire body, especially within your center which contains the uterus. Whatever you eat and drink will immediately effect this area of the body. Cold also prevents proper oxygenation, a necessary tool in combating harmful bacteria, and even prevents regeneration of tissue within the uterus and perineum.

But that isn't everything. Cold foods and drinks also contract blood vessels and makes it harder for the body to digest nutrients, especially fats (which are essential in postpartum for healing and your milk supply for baby). Even when a body isn't in postpartum, it will expend a great deal of energy warming up the consumed contents to an acceptable temperature within your body. And energy isn't something a postpartum body has a great deal of, and it's certainly not something you want to give away to warming whatever you ingested.

The moral of this misconception is to stay far away from cold foods and drinks. Make sure what you ingest is at least room temperature.

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2. You should return to eating like you were in pregnancy. Or before.

FALSE.

Eating during this time is radically different than eating in pregnancy or pre-pregnancy. And here's why: your postpartum body lacks digestive enzymes, which are necessary for breaking up foods and suppling your body with nutrients needed for hormones balance and regulation, milk supply, and overall healing and health.

Due to the amount of energy necessary to break down foods, it's simply easier for the body to receive foods that are easy to digest. Foods that are easy to digest also tend to be heavily nutrient dense. By requiring the body to eat these foods, it's able to get what it needs faster and without exerting any extra energy to get there.

Often, this is the very reason why most women experience intense gas and bloating in postpartum. Many times, that extends to indigestion, hemorrhoids post-birth, and a host of other gut issues. When you cannot break down the foods you're ingesting, the food just... sits there. It essentially starts rotting in your belly. Which then causes the gas, bloating and so on. If it continues without correction, you develop a "leaky gut", meaning you become the proud owner of food sensitivities and allergies. This is also the main cause for the rise in autoimmune diseases.

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2. You should return to eating like you were in pregnancy. Or before.

Continued...

Many women usually ask “well I can just take digestive enzymes then, right?” The answer is sure, but I don’t recommend it. We don’t fully understand why the postpartum body lacks enzymes, which means it’s even important to allow the body to regulate itself first before adding anything additional to facilitate it. Often, adding herbs, essential oils, or gut stimulating supplements such as enzymes, will cause a misbalance to occur. Until it becomes a problem that needs correcting, allow the body to naturally regulate its digestive enzyme levels. Until then, eat warm foods that are very easy to digest and nutrient dense.

### 3. It's okay if you don't want any food at all in postpartum.

FALSE.

As a Postpartum Bliss Coach, I often run into a mama who just had a baby but has little to no appetite. If this is you, there is a problem at hand. When breastfeeding, you require at least another 500 calories in your diet. For many mamas, this usually results in an insatiable appetite, especially after feeling so limited after third trimester. Although most lack of appetite is related to postpartum depression, that's not the only cause.

First and foremost, make sure that you are eating warm foods that are easy to digest. If you aren't, this could cause a multitude of gut issues that can make food less than desirable. Sometimes if you've been eating a diet that doesn't support your body's needs for some time, including foods that you may be allergic or sensitive to and may not know about, your nutrition levels could already be suffering. If you already have these issues, then eat a diet that's not supportive of postpartum healing, you enter a zone where thyroid issues become likely.

Another common issue for not wanting to eat in postpartum is to gain a certain level of control in the midst of chaos. If you are someone who needs to feel in control all the time, postpartum can have often leave you feeling powerless. Whether conscious or unconscious, moms will use food as a mean to gain whatever control they feel they need.

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## 4. Breastfeeding Will help you lose those pregnancy pounds..

FALSE.

This is just plain false and usually has the opposite effect. If you aren't following the warm food and nutrient dense protocol mentioned above, you aren't getting enough nutrients into your body, and you're likely feeling sluggish, exhausted, and like a hormonal hot mess. It's so easy to blame the fact that you have a newborn in your life who's responsible for all of this. And to some degree, that's certainly very true. However, you control much more than you think.

Eating a limited diet that doesn't support a postpartum body will make your hold onto more because it's afraid it won't get enough. When you aren't getting the right nutrients, it becomes more difficult to sleep. Nutrients and sleep are essential for hormone regulation. Without balanced hormones meant for postpartum, you have milk supply issues and problems regulating your weight.

As a side note, weight loss in postpartum should be the LAST thing on a mama's agenda. Instead, focus on having a healthy body in which you can build a solid foundation. Postpartum is a time when every layer of your being is shed. You have the power to heal your deepest wounds and traumas and reconnect with your truest being. When you care and nourish yourself thoroughly, you have the power to walk away feeling stronger than you did before pregnancy. Imagine rocking the best body you've ever had with a toddler on your hip. Eat right and don't work out in the first several months (that's another post).

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## 5. Not eating meat is fine, as long as you supplement.

FALSE.

Living a vegetarian or vegan lifestyle has amazing environmental benefits, offers a way to help “clean” the gut, and provides a powerful means to spirituality. But when it comes to nutrition in postpartum, it isn’t something you can just forgo, even if you supplement with pills.

There are certain nutrients, such as B12, which are vital in the development of red blood cells and nerve regeneration, that are necessary for your uterus in healing. However, taking a B12 supplement doesn’t just solve the problem. A supplement only consists on the basic item itself. A B12 vitamin is just a B12 vitamin. What’s missing is the other components only offered in meat (creatine for energy, carnosine for muscle function, heme-iron for easy digestion) and so much more that science has yet to fully understand. Protein from animals is also far easier to digest and requires less energy for the body to digest than other protein sources.

Almost every culture and religion on the planet has a specific diet plan for postpartum and every single one of them contain meat (except those strong of the Hindu religion). The necessity of the nutrients derived from meat are notable for their effects on breastmilk and supply, mood regulation (vegetarians and vegans are at an increased risk for postpartum depression), and overall lessening the healing time of moms.

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## 6. Vitamins will cover the imbalances.

FALSE.

It's no joke that our food lacks the nutritional levels it once did in before industrialization of society. To consume the same amount of nutrient levels from a handful of leafy greens in year 1840, we'd have to consume handfuls in today's world. Because of this fact and the difficulty in getting what our body needs, even when not in postpartum, we've come to rely on supplements.

Supplements play a major role in pregnancy and as every provider will tell you, a necessary component to growing a healthy baby. However, there is a massive problem with supplements.

First, they aren't to be treated equally. Supplements aren't a regulated industry and there are several concerns for the quality of products on the market. How to even know if your body is responding well to a vitamin is purely individual. And often, this leads to lots of money spent finding the perfect match, especially for higher quality supplements.

In postpartum, the body changes rapidly and what once worked in pregnancy may not work well after the baby. It's also very challenging for the body to break down a multi-vitamin that's been engineered to fit inside a capsule.

Never rely on vitamins to get the essential nutrients your postpartum body needs. Instead, use highly nutrient dense food, being careful to not leave behind any gaps. Generally, this process is handled by a tribe of women who take on the responsibility of a new mother, but as that time in our history lapses, it's important to plan our postpartum nutrition plan in pregnancy, so that we don't fall short of feel overburdened by our own nutritional needs.

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7. You should simply follow RDA, science, and your doctor's advice.

FALSE.

Want to know a little secret? RDA (a measuring tool set for determining what your daily nutrient intake should be) is a made-up set of numbers, determined by a panel of people who decided that those numbers were the optimal level we humans should be getting. Although most of this is based in science, it's still a very difficult subject to understand and it's constantly under review and changing.

The problem is that the scientific method breaks down information to study one simple component of nutrition. The whole of nutrition is so complex, that it cannot be considered. So although we learn much from isolating specific nutrients and studying them, there is a significant gap in how it relates to the whole body. It's also interesting to note that the most of these studies are completed using the RDA's as their way of determining what's important, and these numbers vary in recommendation per country. Japan's recommendations are higher than America's, and so on.

Not only is science limited and ever evolving, your doctor's education in nutrition is not. Unfortunately, even when it comes to prenatal care, most doctors have not trained or even taken a class on the subject.

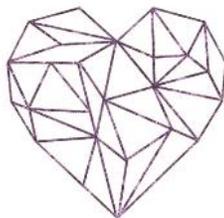
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# Bonus! MTHFR gene mutations and what you need to know

It appears that the famous MTHFR gene mutation is affecting many new mothers and families on a large scale. The variants of issues can cause chronic pain and fatigue, mood disorders, and even cancer. When this genetic mutation is passed down onto our children, we often first see it in the form of lip and tongue tie problems, which can make breastfeeding painful and newborn growth slow.

However, although our genetics are passed down, they don't determine whether or not our baby will also develop issues. As a matter of fact, the environment in which we create for our baby dramatically influences what happens, even in utero.

If you know that you have the MTHFR gene mutation or suspect that you do, make sure that your diet in pregnancy and in postpartum contain whole foods that have been minimally processed, and eat only organic nutrients in an effort to avoid toxins. It's also important to stay far away from folic acid, which the body with this gene mutation considers a massive toxin. Instead, get plenty of folate in your diet, the natural form of folic acid. Also, your vitamin A levels within foods support healthy development, especially of the palate.



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