BirthX

POSTPARTUM COOKBOOK · SECOND EDITION

Heal your body after birth

43 warm, moist, nourishing recipes for the first six weeks, rooted in Ayurveda and postpartum traditions from around the world.






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43 warm, moist, nourishing recipes for the first six weeks, rooted in Ayurveda and postpartum traditions from around the world.

SECOND EDITION · BIRTHX TEAM

Heal your body after birth: A warming postpartum cookbook
Second edition, 2026

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For education only. Not medical advice — talk with your care team. The recipes and traditions in this book are not a substitute for care from a qualified clinician. Check with your care team before using herbs, especially while lactating or taking medicines.

Food photos are AI-generated illustrations of the recipes.

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BEFORE YOU START

Why food matters after birth

A few simple habits can make the first six weeks a little easier.

Your body is healing, and food is part of that

In the weeks after birth, your body repairs tissue, replaces blood and fluids, and may be making milk. What you eat and drink affects your energy, your healing and how comfortable you feel. If you're breast or chestfeeding, you need about **330–400 extra calories a day**. That's about one more small meal.

1. Drink to thirst

Keep water nearby at every feed. Drink when you're thirsty and check that your pee is pale yellow. Drinking more than you need won't boost your milk supply.

Warm drinks count. Ayurveda favors them, and many people find them soothing.

2. Choose warm, moist, cooked food

Cultures around the world feed new parents soups, stews, porridges and broths. They're easy to eat with one hand and easy to digest.

For the first few weeks, go easy on cold, raw, dry and fried foods. Cook fruit instead of eating it raw.

3. Get protein, iron and healing nutrients

Lentils, dal, cooked greens, pumpkin seeds, nut butters, eggs, chicken and fish all help you rebuild. Squeeze lemon or lime on plant foods, since vitamin C helps you absorb their iron.

Your body makes its own collagen from protein and vitamin C. Food only has collagen if it comes from an animal, like bone broth or skin-on chicken. Mushrooms don't contain it.

4. Delegate and rest

Rest is part of healing, and stress and lost sleep can affect milk supply. Hand off cooking, dishes, laundry, errands and pet care.

Set up a meal train at **mealtrain.com** or **takethemeal.com** and share this book with it. Set limits on how long guests stay and what they help with.

That first bowel movement

Fluids, warm drinks, stewed fruit, prunes, a spoonful of ghee and short walks can all help. Ask your care team about a stool softener or magnesium if you need more help. **Skip castor oil**, a harsh stimulant laxative that can get into breast milk, and **aloe latex**.

Fish is a good choice

Aim for 2–3 servings a week of low-mercury fish like salmon, sardines, cod, catfish or tilapia. It adds protein and omega-3 fats. **Fresh herbs, eggs and bone broth** are easy ways to add more protein to any plant-based recipe here.

BEFORE YOU START

Eating the Ayurvedic way

Warm, moist and gently spiced: the guidelines every recipe in this book follows.

What Ayurveda says about the weeks after birth

Ayurveda is India's traditional system of medicine. Its postpartum care, called **sutika paricharya**, lasts about six weeks. Ayurveda teaches that birth leaves the body cold, dry and depleted (too much **vata**). The remedy is warmth, rest, oil massage and food that's **warm, moist, oily, soft and gently spiced**.

These are traditional guidelines, not rules backed by clinical trials. Use what feels good, and eat what your body tolerates.

Lean on

- Soups, stews, porridges and dal
- Ghee, sesame oil and coconut
- White basmati rice, oats and amaranth
- Split mung beans and red lentils
- Sweet potato, squash, carrots, beets, fennel, okra, zucchini and cooked greens
- Stewed fruit, soaked dates, figs and raisins
- Soaked, peeled almonds and nut butters
- Warm milk and warm teas
- Ginger, cumin, fennel, ajwain, turmeric, cardamom, cinnamon and hing

Go easy on, especially in weeks 1–3

- Iced drinks and food straight from the fridge
- Raw salads and raw vegetables
- Dry, crunchy food like crackers, chips, popcorn and puffed cereal
- Heavy beans like kidney, black, pinto and chickpeas
- Cabbage, broccoli and cauliflower
- Nightshades (tomatoes, potatoes, eggplant, peppers) and hot chili
- Mushrooms, corn, barley and quinoa
- Fried and heavily processed food
- Alcohol

Let meals grow with you

From day 1

Soupy and soft

Congee, kitchari, moong dal, stewed apples, kheer, broth, warm milk and teas.

→

From week 2

More substance

Grain bowls, vegetable soups, chicken soups and ghee-rich sweets.

→

From week 3

Heartier meals

Beans, nut stews and fish, with bigger portions as your appetite returns.

Plant-based swaps

Use coconut or sesame oil instead of ghee. Use unsweetened almond, oat or coconut milk instead of dairy. Meat and fish recipes note a vegetarian option where there is one. Freshly cooked food is the Ayurvedic ideal, but a well-stocked freezer is real life. Reheat until steaming.

BEFORE YOU START

Pantry, herbs and safety

What to keep on hand, what to skip, and when to call for help.

Stock the pantry

Fats and grains

- Ghee, toasted sesame oil, coconut oil
- White basmati and jasmine rice
- Steel-cut and rolled oats, amaranth
- Split yellow mung dal, red lentils, adzuki beans

Spices

- Cumin, coriander, fennel, ajwain and mustard seeds
- Turmeric, cardamom, cinnamon, cloves
- Fresh and dried ginger, black pepper
- Hing (asafoetida); look for gluten-free

Sweet and extras

- Medjool dates, raisins, figs
- Almonds, cashews, pumpkin and sesame seeds
- Jaggery, maple syrup, honey
- Kombu, saffron, coconut milk

Herbs and lactation

"Natural" doesn't always mean studied. This edition drops **ashwagandha** and **shatavari**, which have little safety data for lactation, and changes two tea blends.

Fenugreek in food amounts is fine for most people. As a supplement it often causes stomach upset, and it may not suit anyone allergic to peanuts or chickpeas. Look up any herb in **LactMed**, a free NIH database, and check with your care team or an IBCLC.

Kitchen safety

- Refrigerate cooked food within 2 hours.
- Eat leftovers within 3–4 days, or freeze them.
- Reheat soups and stews to 165°F, until steaming.
- Honey is fine for you, but never give it to a baby under 1 year.
- Cook chicken to 165°F and fish to 145°F.

When to call

Call 911 for chest pain, trouble breathing, a seizure, or thoughts of hurting yourself or your baby.

Call your care team for bleeding that soaks a pad in an hour or clots the size of an egg, a fever of 100.4°F or higher, a red, swollen or painful leg, an incision that isn't healing, or a headache that won't go away or comes with vision changes.

Feeling sad, anxious or overwhelmed? Baby blues can last up to 2 weeks. If it lasts longer or feels heavy at any point, you're not alone. Call or text the National Maternal Mental Health Hotline, **1-833-TLC-MAMA (1-833-852-6262)**, free and 24/7. You can also call or text the Postpartum Support International HelpLine at **1-800-944-4773**.

Breakfast and porridges

Soft, warm and easy to digest. Start the day with something cooked.

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BREAKFAST AND PORRIDGES

Coconut almond oatmeal

Creamy steel-cut oats with ginger, warm spices and soaked, peeled almonds, which are easier to digest.

From week 2 | Serves 3–4 | BirthX classic, revised



INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 cup whole raw almonds
- 1 cup steel-cut oats
- 2 cups water
- 2 cups coconut milk (carton) or whole milk
- Pinch of salt
- 1/2 cup chopped pitted dates, dried figs or apricots
- 1 Tbsp fresh grated ginger
- 1 Tbsp ghee or coconut oil
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp ground cardamom
- 2 Tbsp unsweetened shredded coconut
- Maple syrup or jaggery, to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Soak the almonds in water for 6–8 hours or overnight. Drain, slip off the skins and chop.
2. In a heavy saucepan, bring the oats, water, milk and salt to a boil. Lower the heat to a gentle simmer.
3. Stir in the dried fruit, ginger and ghee. Simmer uncovered for 25–30 minutes, stirring often, until the oats are tender and creamy. Add a splash of hot water if it gets too thick.
4. Stir in the cinnamon and cardamom for the last 5 minutes.
5. Serve hot, topped with coconut, almonds and a drizzle of maple syrup.

Tip: Short on time? Soak the oats overnight in the water. They'll cook in about 15 minutes.

BREAKFAST AND PORRIDGES

Amaranth and rice porridge

A gently sweet porridge with fennel, cinnamon and a spoonful of nut butter for staying power.

From week 2 | Serves 3–4 | BirthX classic, revised



INGREDIENTS

- 1 Tbsp ghee or coconut oil
- 1 tsp fennel seeds
- 1 cup amaranth, rinsed in a fine sieve
- 1/2 cup white basmati rice, rinsed
- 4 cups water
- Pinch of salt
- 1 cup coconut milk (carton) or whole milk
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp ground cloves
- 1 Tbsp almond, cashew or sunflower butter
- 1–2 Tbsp maple syrup

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Warm the ghee in a saucepan over medium heat. Add the fennel seeds and stir for 30 seconds, until fragrant.
2. Add the amaranth, rice, water and salt. Bring to a boil, then cover, lower the heat and simmer for 25 minutes. Stir every 5–10 minutes so it doesn't stick.
3. Stir in the milk, cinnamon and cloves. Simmer uncovered for 5–10 minutes more, until thick and creamy.
4. Stir in the nut butter and maple syrup. Serve hot.

Tip: Amaranth thickens as it cools. Loosen leftovers with hot water or milk when you reheat them.

Savory ginger congee

Rice simmered slowly until silky. In China, congee is a classic food for the first month after birth (zuo yuezi).

From day 1 | Serves 4 | China



INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup jasmine or white rice
- 9 cups water or broth (try the Healing ginger broth)
- 2-inch piece fresh ginger, cut into thin matchsticks
- 1 tsp salt, or to taste
- 1 Tbsp toasted sesame oil

To top

- 2 Tbsp toasted sesame seeds
- 2 scallions, thinly sliced
- Shredded cooked chicken or a soft-cooked egg (optional)
- Tamari or soy sauce

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Rinse the rice in a few changes of water until the water runs mostly clear.
2. Bring the water or broth to a boil in a large, heavy pot. Add the rice and half the ginger.
3. When it boils again, lower the heat to a gentle simmer. Partly cover and cook for 1 to 1¼ hours. Stir every 15 minutes and scrape the bottom, until the grains break down into a silky porridge. Add hot water if it gets too thick.
4. Stir in the salt and sesame oil.
5. Ladle into bowls. Top with the rest of the ginger, sesame seeds, scallions and chicken or egg if you like. Add a splash of tamari.

Tip: Pressure cooker: use 7 cups liquid. Cook on high pressure for 30 minutes, then let the pressure release on its own for 15 minutes.

BREAKFAST AND PORRIDGES

Uluva kanji (fenugreek rice porridge)

A soft rice porridge with fenugreek seeds and coconut milk, traditionally made for new parents in Kerala.

From day 1 | Serves 3–4 | Kerala, India



INGREDIENTS

- 1 Tbsp fenugreek seeds
- 3/4 cup white rice (or Kerala matta rice)
- 4 cups water
- 3 garlic cloves, sliced
- 1 cup canned coconut milk
- Salt, to taste

To finish

- 1 tsp ghee
- 2 shallots, thinly sliced

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Soak the fenugreek seeds in water overnight. Drain.
2. Rinse the rice. Put the rice, fenugreek, garlic and water in a pot. Bring to a boil, then partly cover and simmer for 25–30 minutes until the rice is very soft. Mash a little with the back of a spoon.
3. Stir in the coconut milk and salt. Warm through for 3–5 minutes without a hard boil.
4. Heat the ghee in a small pan. Fry the shallots until golden, about 4 minutes. Pour over the porridge and serve warm.

Tip: For a sweet version, skip the garlic, shallots and salt. Stir in 2–3 Tbsp grated jaggery with the coconut milk. Matta rice takes longer: cook it until very soft.

Hobakjuk (pumpkin porridge)

A smooth, golden squash porridge. Pumpkin is a traditional Korean food after birth, often given to ease swelling.

From day 1 | Serves 4 | Korea



INGREDIENTS

- 1 small kabocha squash (about 2 lb), peeled, seeded and cubed (about 5 cups)
- 4 cups water
- 1/3 cup sweet (glutinous) rice flour
- 1/2 cup cold water
- 2–3 Tbsp brown sugar or maple syrup
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp ground ginger
- 1/4 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 cup cooked adzuki beans, to top (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Put the squash and 4 cups water in a pot. Cover and simmer for 15–20 minutes, until very soft.
2. Blend until smooth with a stick blender, or carefully in a blender with the lid vented. Return to the pot.
3. Whisk the rice flour into the 1/2 cup cold water until smooth.
4. Bring the squash back to a gentle simmer. Slowly pour in the rice flour mixture, stirring the whole time. Cook for about 5 minutes, stirring, until thick and glossy.
5. Stir in the sugar, salt, ginger and cinnamon. Serve warm, topped with adzuki beans if you like.

BREAKFAST AND PORRIDGES

Ayurvedic stewed apples

A classic Ayurvedic first-thing-in-the-morning food. Cooking fruit makes it warm, soft and easy on digestion.

From day 1 | Serves 2 | India · Ayurveda



INGREDIENTS

- 2 apples, peeled, cored and chopped
- 1/2 cup water
- 4–5 whole cloves
- 1/4 tsp ground cinnamon
- Pinch of ground ginger
- 2 Tbsp raisins or chopped dates
- 1 tsp ghee

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Put everything in a small pot. Cover and bring to a simmer.
2. Cook for 8–10 minutes, until the apples are soft.
3. Take out the cloves. Eat warm, on its own or over oatmeal.

Tip: Pears work too. Make a double batch and reheat it the next morning.

Soups and stews

One pot, lots of broth. Easy to make ahead, freeze and reheat.

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SOUPS AND STEWS

Recovery soup

A golden vegetable soup with dill, a traditional herb for lactating parents. Sweet potato replaces white potato.

From week 2 | Serves 4–6 | BirthX classic, revised



INGREDIENTS

- 2 Tbsp ghee or sesame oil
- 1 tsp black mustard seeds
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1/2 tsp fenugreek seeds
- Pinch of asafoetida (hing)
- 1 yellow onion, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 Tbsp minced fresh ginger
- 4 cups broth
- 2 cups water
- 2-inch strip kombu
- 2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 4 medium carrots, cubed
- 2 cups green beans, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 tsp ground turmeric
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- Salt, to taste
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh dill

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the ghee in a large pot over medium heat. Add the mustard seeds. When they pop, add the cumin, fenugreek and hing and stir for 20 seconds. Fenugreek burns fast, so keep it moving.
2. Add the onion and cook for 6–8 minutes, until soft. Add the garlic and ginger and cook for 1 minute.
3. Add the broth, water, kombu, sweet potatoes, carrots and turmeric. Bring to a boil, then cover and simmer for 10 minutes.
4. Add the green beans. Simmer for 10–12 minutes more, until everything is tender.
5. Take out the kombu. Stir in the black pepper, salt and most of the dill. Cook for 2 minutes. Top with the rest of the dill.

SOUPS AND STEWS

Healing ginger broth

A sipping broth and soup base. It replaces the original mushroom broth. Ayurveda treats mushrooms as heavy, and medicinal mushrooms have little safety data for lactation.

From day 1 | Makes about 2 quarts | BirthX classic, revised



INGREDIENTS

- 12 cups water
- 1 yellow onion, quartered
- 3 carrots, cut into chunks
- 1 small fennel bulb, quartered
- 1 cup squash or sweet potato chunks
- 3-inch piece fresh ginger, sliced
- 4 garlic cloves, smashed
- 4-inch strip kombu
- 2 bay leaves
- 4 sprigs fresh thyme
- 1 tsp black peppercorns
- 1 tsp ground turmeric (or 2 inches fresh, sliced)
- 1 Tbsp salt
- 2 Tbsp white miso

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Put everything except the miso in a large pot. Bring to a boil, then lower to a gentle simmer.
2. After 30 minutes, take out the kombu so it doesn't turn the broth bitter.
3. Keep simmering, uncovered, for 1½–2 hours in total.
4. Strain. Whisk the miso with a ladle of warm broth, then stir it back in. Don't boil after adding the miso.
5. Cool, then refrigerate for up to 5 days or freeze for up to 3 months.

Tip: For bone broth, add 2 lb chicken backs, wings or feet with the vegetables and simmer for 4–6 hours. Skim off any foam.

SOUPS AND STEWS

Moong dal soup

Split yellow mung beans cook down into a smooth soup. In Ayurveda, they're the easiest legume to digest.

From day 1 | Serves 4 | India



INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup split yellow moong dal
- 5 cups water
- 1/2 tsp ground turmeric
- 1 Tbsp grated fresh ginger
- Salt, to taste

Tadka (spiced ghee)

- 1½ Tbsp ghee
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1/4 tsp ajwain seeds (optional)
- Pinch of asafoetida (hing)
- 2 garlic cloves, minced

To finish

- Squeeze of lemon
- Chopped cilantro

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Rinse the dal until the water runs clear. Soak for 30 minutes to 2 hours, then drain.
2. Put the dal, water, turmeric and ginger in a pot. Bring to a boil and skim off the foam.
3. Partly cover and simmer for 25–30 minutes, until the dal falls apart. Whisk until smooth. Add hot water to make it as soupy as you like.
4. For the tadka, heat the ghee in a small pan. Add the cumin and ajwain. When they sizzle, add the hing and garlic and cook for 30 seconds, until golden.
5. Pour the tadka into the soup. Add salt, lemon and cilantro.

Tip: Pressure cooker: cook the dal with the water for 8 minutes on high pressure, then let the pressure release on its own.

SOUPS AND STEWS

Carrot ginger soup

A smooth, warming soup topped with ghee-toasted pumpkin seeds instead of crunchy roasted chickpeas, which are dry and gassy.

From week 2 | Serves 3–4 | BirthX classic, revised



INGREDIENTS

- 1 Tbsp ghee or coconut oil
- 1 tsp black mustard seeds
- 1 yellow onion, chopped
- 2 Tbsp grated fresh ginger
- 1 lb carrots, peeled and chopped
- 4 cups water or broth
- 2 tsp ground coriander
- 1/2 tsp ground cumin
- 1/2 cup coconut milk (optional)
- Salt, to taste

Pumpkin seed topping

- 1/3 cup pumpkin seeds
- 1 tsp ghee
- Pinch of cinnamon and salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the ghee in a large pot. Add the mustard seeds. When they pop, add the onion and ginger and cook for 6–8 minutes, until soft.
2. Add the carrots, water, coriander and cumin. Bring to a boil, then cover and simmer for 15–20 minutes, until the carrots are very tender.
3. Stir in the coconut milk and salt. Blend until smooth. If you use a blender, vent the lid and cover it with a towel, because hot soup expands.
4. For the topping, toast the pumpkin seeds in the ghee over medium heat for 3–4 minutes, until they puff and pop. Add the cinnamon and salt.
5. Serve the soup hot with the seeds on top.

SOUPS AND STEWS

Coconut squash and okra soup

Replaces the corn chowder. Squash and okra give it body without corn, potatoes or curry paste.

From week 2 | Serves 4–6 | BirthX classic, revised



INGREDIENTS

- 1 Tbsp ghee or coconut oil
- 1 tsp black mustard seeds
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 yellow onion, chopped
- 1 Tbsp grated fresh ginger
- 1 tsp ground turmeric
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1 small butternut squash (about 2 lb), peeled and cubed
- 2 carrots, chopped
- 3 cups broth
- 1 can (13.5 oz) coconut milk
- 12 okra pods, sliced 1/2 inch thick
- 1 tsp fresh thyme leaves
- Salt and a squeeze of lime, to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the ghee in a large pot. Add the mustard and cumin seeds. When the mustard seeds pop, add the onion and cook for 6 minutes.
2. Add the ginger, turmeric and pepper and stir for 1 minute.
3. Add the squash, carrots and broth. Cover and simmer for 15–20 minutes, until soft. Blend until smooth.
4. Stir in the coconut milk and okra. Simmer for 8–10 minutes, until the okra is tender.
5. Add the thyme, salt and lime. Serve hot.

SOUPS AND STEWS

Sweet potato and red lentil groundnut stew

Replaces the nut butter stew. It keeps the nut butter but swaps kidney beans and peas for red lentils, and skips the tomato and cayenne.

From week 3 | Serves 4 | West African–inspired



INGREDIENTS

- 1 Tbsp ghee or coconut oil
- 1 tsp black mustard seeds
- 1 yellow onion, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced, and 1 Tbsp grated fresh ginger
- 1 tsp ground coriander, 1/2 tsp each ground cumin and turmeric
- 2 medium sweet potatoes, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 2 carrots, sliced
- 1/2 cup red lentils, rinsed
- 3 cups broth
- 2 cups water
- 1/3 cup natural peanut, almond or sunflower butter
- 2 cups chopped spinach or chard
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- Salt, to taste
- 2 Tbsp chopped toasted peanuts or almonds

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the ghee in a large pot. Add the mustard seeds. When they pop, add the onion and cook for 6 minutes. Add the garlic, ginger and spices and cook for 1 minute.
2. Add the sweet potatoes, carrots, lentils, broth and water. Bring to a boil, then cover and simmer for 20 minutes, until the lentils break down and the vegetables are tender.
3. Whisk the nut butter with a ladle of hot broth until smooth. Stir it back into the pot.
4. Add the greens and cook for 2–3 minutes. Add the lemon juice and salt.
5. Serve topped with chopped nuts.

Tip: Traditional groundnut stews use tomato and chili. If you're craving heat later on, add a pinch of cayenne.

SOUPS AND STEWS

Adzuki bean and kabocha stew

Replaces the three-bean chili. After mung beans, adzuki beans are the easiest beans to digest, and squash makes the stew creamy.

From week 3 | Serves 6 | BirthX classic, revised



INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup dried adzuki beans
- 2 Tbsp ghee or sesame oil
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- Pinch of asafoetida (hing)
- 1 yellow onion, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 Tbsp grated fresh ginger
- 2 tsp ground coriander
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 6 cups broth or water
- 4-inch strip kombu
- 2 parsnips or carrots, chopped
- 3 cups cubed kabocha or butternut squash
- 2 cups chopped kale or chard
- Salt and lime juice, to taste
- Chopped cilantro

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Soak the beans in water for 6–8 hours or overnight. Drain and rinse.
2. Heat the ghee in a large pot. Add the cumin seeds and hing, then the onion. Cook for 6 minutes. Add the garlic, ginger, ground spices and oregano and cook for 1 minute.
3. Add the beans, broth and kombu. Boil for 10 minutes, then cover and simmer for 45 minutes.
4. Add the parsnips and squash. Simmer for 20–25 minutes more, until the beans are creamy and the squash is soft.
5. Take out the kombu. Stir in the greens and cook for 5 minutes. Add salt (after the beans are soft) and lime. Top with cilantro.

SOUPS AND STEWS

Leek, beet and basmati stew

Replaces the barley stew. Ayurveda considers barley drying, so this version uses basmati rice and leaves out the tomatoes and mushrooms.

From week 2 | Serves 4–6 | BirthX classic, revised



INGREDIENTS

- 2 Tbsp ghee or coconut oil
- 1 Tbsp ground coriander
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 1 yellow onion, chopped
- 2 leeks, white and light green parts, thinly sliced
- 1 Tbsp grated fresh ginger
- 6 cups broth
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 beet, peeled and diced
- 2 carrots, diced
- 3/4 cup white basmati rice, rinsed
- 1 tsp ground turmeric
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1 can (13.5 oz) coconut milk
- 1 bunch leafy greens, chopped
- Salt and lemon juice, to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the ghee in a large pot. Add the coriander and cumin and stir for 30 seconds.
2. Add the onion, leeks and ginger. Cook for 6–8 minutes, until soft.
3. Add the broth, bay leaf, beet and carrots. Simmer for 10 minutes.
4. Add the rice, turmeric and pepper. Cover and simmer for 15–18 minutes, until the rice is tender.
5. Stir in the coconut milk and greens. Cook for 3 minutes, until the greens wilt. Add salt and lemon. Take out the bay leaf before serving.

Miyeok-guk (seaweed soup)

In Korea, new parents traditionally eat this soup every day for weeks after birth. It's also the classic birthday soup.

From day 1 | Serves 4 | Korea



INGREDIENTS

- 1 oz dried miyeok (wakame), about 1 cup loosely packed
- 1 Tbsp toasted sesame oil
- 6 oz beef brisket or chuck, thinly sliced (optional)
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 6 cups water (or broth for a meat-free version)
- 1 Tbsp Korean soup soy sauce (guk-ganjang) or tamari
- Salt, to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Soak the seaweed in cold water for 15–20 minutes. It will swell a lot. Rinse, squeeze out the water and cut it into 2-inch pieces.
2. Heat the sesame oil in a pot over medium heat. If you're using beef, cook it for 2 minutes.
3. Add the seaweed and garlic and stir for 2–3 minutes.
4. Add the water and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer for 20–30 minutes. Longer simmering is traditional.
5. Season with the soy sauce and salt. Serve hot with rice.

Tip: Seaweed is high in iodine. Enjoy it a few times a week rather than at every meal, and check with your care team if you have a thyroid condition.

SOUPS AND STEWS

Tinola (ginger chicken soup)

A light, gingery chicken soup with moringa (malunggay) leaves, traditionally served to lactating parents in the Philippines.

From week 2 | Serves 4–6 | Philippines



INGREDIENTS

- 1 Tbsp oil or ghee
- 1 yellow onion, sliced
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 2-inch piece fresh ginger, cut into matchsticks
- 2 lb bone-in chicken thighs and drumsticks
- 2 Tbsp fish sauce (patis), or salt to taste
- 6 cups water
- 1 small green papaya or 2 chayote, peeled and cubed
- 2 cups moringa leaves or baby spinach
- Black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the oil in a large pot. Cook the onion, garlic and ginger for 3–4 minutes, until soft.
2. Add the chicken and cook for 5 minutes, turning, until lightly browned. Add the fish sauce and cook for 1 minute.
3. Add the water and bring to a boil. Skim off the foam. Cover and simmer for 30 minutes.
4. Add the papaya or chayote. Simmer for 10–12 minutes, until tender and the chicken reaches 165°F.
5. Stir in the leaves and cook for 1–2 minutes. Season with pepper and serve hot.

SOUPS AND STEWS

Caldo de pollo para la cuarentena

Chicken soup is a mainstay of la cuarentena, the traditional 40-day rest after birth in Mexico and much of Latin America.

From week 2 | Serves 6 | Mexico



INGREDIENTS

- 2½ lb bone-in chicken pieces
- 10 cups water
- 1/2 yellow onion
- 4 garlic cloves
- 2 bay leaves
- 1-inch piece fresh ginger, sliced
- 2 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup white rice, rinsed
- 3 carrots, sliced
- 2 chayote, peeled and cubed
- 1 zucchini, cubed
- 1 tsp dried Mexican oregano
- Chopped cilantro and lime wedges, to serve

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Put the chicken, water, onion, garlic, bay leaves, ginger and salt in a large pot. Bring to a boil and skim off the foam. Simmer, partly covered, for 40 minutes.
2. Take out the chicken. When it's cool enough to handle, shred the meat and throw away the bones and skin. Take out the onion and bay leaves.
3. Add the rice and carrots to the broth. Simmer for 10 minutes.
4. Add the chayote and zucchini. Simmer for 10 minutes more, until everything is tender.
5. Return the chicken. Stir in the oregano. Serve with cilantro and lime.

Tip: Many family recipes add potatoes, corn and cabbage. We left those out to keep it Ayurveda-friendly. Add them back if they sit well with you.

SOUPS AND STEWS

Dominican sancocho

A thick Dominican stew of beef, chicken, root vegetables and corn on the cob, with auyama cooked down to thicken the broth.

From week 3 | Serves 6–8 | Dominican Republic



INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb beef stew meat, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1½ lb bone-in chicken pieces
- For the marinade: juice of 1 lime, 4 mashed garlic cloves, 1 tsp dried oregano, 1½ tsp salt and 2 Tbsp chopped cilantro
- 1 Tbsp ghee or oil
- 1 yellow onion, chopped
- 1-inch piece fresh ginger, grated
- 12 cups water
- 1 lb auyama (calabaza) or kabocha, cubed, divided
- 1 lb each ñame, yautía and yuca, peeled and cubed
- 1 green plantain, cut into chunks
- 2 ears corn, cut into 2-inch rounds
- 1/4 cup chopped cilantro or culantro
- White rice and avocado, to serve

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Toss the beef and chicken with the marinade. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes, or overnight.
2. Heat the ghee in a large pot. Brown the beef, 6–8 minutes. Add the onion and ginger and cook for 5 minutes.
3. Add the water and half the auyama. Bring to a boil, skim the foam, then partly cover and simmer for 45 minutes. Add the chicken and simmer for 20 minutes.
4. Add the ñame, yautía, yuca, plantain and corn. Simmer for 20 minutes.
5. Add the rest of the auyama. Simmer 15–20 minutes more, until everything is tender, the chicken reaches 165°F and the first auyama has melted into a thick broth.
6. Stir in the cilantro and season with salt. Serve with rice and avocado.

Tip: Cook yuca until soft all the way through, because it isn't safe to eat raw.

SOUPS AND STEWS

Gentle fish pepper soup

Pepper soup is a traditional postpartum dish in Nigeria. This version keeps the warming spices and turns the chili way down.

From week 3 | Serves 4 | Nigeria



INGREDIENTS

- 6 cups water
- 1 yellow onion, chopped
- 1-inch piece fresh ginger, grated
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 Tbsp pepper soup spice blend (sold at African markets and online)
- 4–5 uda pods (grains of Selim), lightly crushed (optional)
- 1 tsp salt or bouillon, to taste
- 1½ lb catfish, tilapia or cod steaks
- Handful of scent leaf or basil, chopped
- Small pinch of ground chili (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Put the water, onion, ginger, garlic, spice blend and uda in a pot. Bring to a boil, then simmer for 15 minutes.
2. Add the salt. Gently lower in the fish.
3. Simmer for 10–12 minutes without stirring, until the fish flakes easily (145°F).
4. Add the scent leaf or basil and the chili, if using. Take out the uda pods. Serve hot.

Tip: Choose low-mercury fish. Catfish, tilapia, cod and salmon are all on the FDA's "best choices" list.

Grain bowls and mains

Heartier meals for when your appetite comes back.

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Kitchari

The heart of Ayurvedic postpartum cooking: rice and mung dal cooked into a soft, spiced porridge with vegetables.

From day 1 | Serves 4–6 | India · Ayurveda



INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup split yellow mung dal
- 1 cup white basmati rice
- 2 Tbsp ghee or coconut oil
- 1 tsp each black mustard seeds and cumin seeds
- Pinch of asafoetida (hing)
- 1 small yellow onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 Tbsp grated fresh ginger
- 1 tsp each ground turmeric and coriander, 1/2 tsp ground cumin
- 6–8 cups water
- 2-inch strip kombu
- 1 sweet potato or 2 small beets, cubed
- 1 small fennel bulb, sliced
- 2 cups chopped leafy greens
- Salt, to taste

Coconut cilantro chutney

- 2 Tbsp unsweetened shredded coconut, 1 cup cilantro, 1/2 cup water, a pinch of salt and a squeeze of lime

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Rinse the dal and rice together. Soak for 1 hour or overnight, then drain.
2. Heat the ghee in a large pot. Add the mustard seeds. When they pop, add the cumin seeds and hing, then the onion. Cook until soft, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic, ginger and ground spices and cook for 30 seconds.
3. Add the dal, rice, 6 cups water and the kombu. Bring to a boil, then partly cover and simmer for 20 minutes.
4. Add the sweet potato and fennel, plus 1–2 cups water if it's getting thick. Simmer for 15–20 minutes more, until everything is soft and porridge-like.
5. Take out the kombu. Stir in the greens and cook for 3–5 minutes. Add salt.
6. Blend the chutney ingredients until smooth. Spoon over each bowl.

GRAIN BOWLS AND MAINS

Beet and greens bowl with cashew-ginger sauce

Braised beets and greens over rice with a warm, creamy cashew sauce. It replaces the shiitake and beets bowl.

From week 2 | Serves 2–3 | BirthX classic, revised



INGREDIENTS

Rice

- 1 cup white basmati rice, rinsed, with 1¾ cups water, 1 tsp ghee and a pinch of salt

Beets and greens

- 2 Tbsp ghee or sesame oil, divided
- 2 medium beets, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 1/2 cup water and 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 Tbsp grated fresh ginger
- 1 bunch chard, kale or spinach, chopped, and salt

Cashew-ginger sauce

- 1/4 cup cashews, soaked 2–4 hours, and 1 Tbsp cashew butter
- 1 small garlic clove, 1 tsp grated ginger, 1/2 tsp turmeric and a pinch of pepper
- 2 tsp lemon juice, 1/3 cup warm water and salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Put the rice, water, ghee and salt in a pot. Bring to a boil, then cover and cook on low for 15 minutes. Rest, covered, for 5 minutes.
2. Heat 1 Tbsp ghee in a skillet. Add the beets and water. Cover and cook for 12–15 minutes, until tender. Uncover and cook until the liquid turns into a glaze.
3. In another pan, heat the rest of the ghee. Add the cumin seeds and ginger and cook for 1 minute. Add the greens and cook for 2–3 minutes, until wilted. Add salt.
4. Drain the nuts. Blend them with the rest of the sauce ingredients until smooth.
5. Fill bowls with rice, beets and greens. Spoon the sauce over, and top with hemp seeds if you have them.

Tip: Add a soft-boiled egg or a scoop of cooked mung beans for extra protein.

Red lentil dal bowl with tahini-ginger drizzle

Replaces the green lentil bowl. Red lentils are easier to digest, and the roasted potatoes are now braised fennel and carrots.

From week 2 | Serves 3 | BirthX classic, revised



INGREDIENTS

Dal

- 1 cup red lentils, rinsed
- 3 cups water
- 1/2 tsp ground turmeric
- 1 Tbsp grated fresh ginger
- Salt, to taste
- 1 Tbsp ghee, 1 tsp cumin seeds, 2 sliced garlic cloves and a pinch of hing, for the tadka

Vegetables and rice

- 1 cup white basmati rice, cooked
- 1 Tbsp ghee
- 1 fennel bulb, sliced
- 2 carrots, sliced
- 1 bunch leafy greens, chopped
- 1 ripe avocado, sliced (optional)

Tahini-ginger drizzle

- 1/3 cup tahini
- 1 Tbsp grated fresh ginger
- Juice of 1/2 lime
- 1 tsp maple syrup
- 3–5 Tbsp warm water and a pinch of salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Simmer the lentils, water, turmeric and ginger, partly covered, for 15–20 minutes, until soft. Add salt.
2. For the tadka, heat the ghee in a small pan. Add the cumin seeds, garlic and hing and cook until the garlic is golden. Stir into the dal.
3. Heat the ghee in a skillet. Add the fennel, carrots and a splash of water. Cover and cook for 10 minutes, until tender. Add the greens for the last 2 minutes.
4. Whisk the drizzle ingredients together, adding water until it pours.
5. Fill bowls with rice, dal and vegetables. Add avocado if you like and drizzle with tahini.

GRAIN BOWLS AND MAINS

Root vegetable coconut korma bowl

Roasted roots finished in a mild coconut-cashew sauce, so they end up soft and moist. Cashew and lemon replace the tomato paste.

From week 2 | Serves 3–4 | BirthX classic, revised



INGREDIENTS

- 1 beet, peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 sweet potato, peeled and cubed
- 2 cups cubed butternut squash
- 2 Tbsp ghee or coconut oil, melted
- 1 Tbsp grated fresh ginger
- 1 tsp garam masala
- Salt

Korma sauce

- 1 Tbsp ghee
- 1/2 tsp ground turmeric
- 1/2 tsp garam masala
- 1/4 tsp ground cardamom
- 1 can (13.5 oz) coconut milk
- 2 Tbsp cashew butter
- 1 tsp lemon juice

To serve

- 1 cup white basmati rice, cooked
- 2 Tbsp pumpkin seeds, toasted in ghee

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the oven to 400°F. Toss the beet on its own, and the sweet potato and squash together, with the ghee, ginger, garam masala and salt. Keep the beet to one side of the pan so it doesn't stain the rest.
2. Roast for 25–35 minutes, turning halfway, until tender.
3. For the sauce, warm the ghee in a pan. Add the spices and stir for 30 seconds. Whisk in the coconut milk and cashew butter. Simmer for 5 minutes.
4. Fold in the sweet potato and squash and simmer for 5 minutes so they soak up the sauce. Add the lemon and salt.
5. Serve over rice, topped with the beets and pumpkin seeds.

Sweet potato and date curry

Replaces the eggplant and date curry. Sweet potato and zucchini take the place of eggplant and white potato.

From week 2 | Serves 3–4 | BirthX classic, revised



INGREDIENTS

- 1 Tbsp ghee, coconut or sesame oil
- 1 tsp brown mustard seeds
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 shallot, minced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 Tbsp grated fresh ginger
- 1½ tsp mild curry powder
- 1/2 tsp ground turmeric
- 2 medium sweet potatoes, cut into 3/4-inch cubes
- 1 cup water or broth
- 1 can (13.5 oz) coconut milk
- 1 medium zucchini, cubed
- 6 Medjool dates, pitted and chopped
- Salt and lime juice, to taste
- Cilantro, to top
- 1 cup white basmati rice, cooked, to serve

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the oil in a large pan. Add the mustard and cumin seeds. When the mustard seeds pop, add the shallot and cook for 2–3 minutes.
2. Add the garlic and ginger and cook for 1 minute. Stir in the curry powder and turmeric for 30 seconds.
3. Add the sweet potatoes and water. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes.
4. Add the coconut milk, zucchini and dates. Simmer uncovered for 8–10 minutes, until tender and the sauce thickens.
5. Add salt and lime. Top with cilantro and serve over rice.

Sesame oil ginger chicken (ma you ji)

A rich, gingery chicken braise that's a classic of the Chinese and Taiwanese first month after birth.

From week 2 | Serves 4 | Taiwan and China



INGREDIENTS

- 3 Tbsp toasted black sesame oil (or toasted sesame oil)
- 3-inch piece fresh ginger, thinly sliced (about 1/2 cup)
- 2 lb bone-in chicken thighs and drumsticks, cut into pieces
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 6 dried red dates (jujubes), slit (optional)
- 1 Tbsp goji berries (optional)
- 1 Tbsp soy sauce or tamari
- Salt, to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the sesame oil over medium-low heat. Sesame oil scorches easily, so keep the heat gentle.
2. Add the ginger and cook slowly for 5–8 minutes, until the edges curl and turn golden.
3. Turn the heat to medium. Add the chicken and cook for 5–6 minutes, turning, until lightly browned.
4. Add the broth and dates. Bring to a boil, then cover and simmer for 25–30 minutes, until the chicken is tender and reaches 165°F.
5. Add the goji berries for the last 5 minutes. Season with soy sauce and salt. Serve over rice or with congee.

Tip: Traditional recipes use a whole bottle of rice wine. Simmering doesn't remove all the alcohol, so this version uses broth.

Snacks and sweets

Warm, ghee-rich treats from kitchens around the world.

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SNACKS AND SWEETS

Date and almond ladoos

Replaces the energy balls. Ghee-toasted nuts and dates rolled into bites you can keep at room temperature.

From week 2 | Makes about 16 | India



INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup almonds
- 1/2 cup cashews or pistachios
- 2 Tbsp ghee or coconut oil, divided
- 2 Tbsp unsweetened shredded coconut, plus more for rolling
- 16 soft Medjool dates (about 1½ cups), pitted
- 1 tsp ground dry ginger
- 1/2 tsp ground cardamom
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- Pinch of salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Toast the nuts in 1 Tbsp ghee in a skillet over medium-low heat for 4–5 minutes, until fragrant. Add the coconut for the last minute.
2. Let cool for 5 minutes. Pulse in a food processor into coarse crumbs.
3. Add the dates, spices, salt and the rest of the ghee. Process until the mixture clumps together.
4. Roll into 1-inch balls, then roll in coconut.
5. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 1 week.

SNACKS AND SWEETS

Sellou (toasted flour and almond sweet)

A nutty, spiced sweet traditionally made for new parents in Morocco. Eat a spoonful or two with warm tea.

From week 2 | Makes about 3 cups | Morocco



INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup blanched almonds
- 1/2 cup sesame seeds
- 1 tsp ground anise
- 1 tsp ground fennel
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- Pinch of nutmeg and salt
- 1/3 cup powdered sugar
- 4 Tbsp ghee or butter, melted
- 2 Tbsp honey

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Toast the flour in a dry skillet over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, for 10–15 minutes, until light golden and nutty. Or bake it at 350°F for 15–20 minutes, stirring every 5 minutes. Let cool.
2. Toast the almonds in a dry pan for 6–8 minutes and the sesame seeds for 2–3 minutes, until golden.
3. Grind the almonds and sesame seeds finely. Stop before they turn into butter.
4. Mix the flour, ground nuts and seeds, spices and sugar.
5. Let the melted ghee cool until warm, not hot, then stir in the honey. Mix into the dry ingredients until the sellou holds together when pressed.
6. Mound it in a bowl or press it into small balls. Store airtight at room temperature for up to 1 month.

Tip: Ayurveda advises against heating honey, so it goes in once the ghee has cooled.

SNACKS AND SWEETS

Gajar halwa (carrot pudding)

Replaces the adaptogenic nut fudge. Carrots are slow-cooked in milk and ghee into a warm, spoonable sweet.

From week 2 | Serves 4–6 | India



INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb carrots, finely grated (about 4 cups)
- 3 Tbsp ghee, plus 1 Tbsp to finish
- 3 cups whole milk (or unsweetened almond or oat milk plus 1/2 cup coconut cream)
- 1/3–1/2 cup sugar or jaggery
- 1/2 tsp ground cardamom
- Pinch of saffron (optional)
- 2 Tbsp chopped pistachios or almonds
- 2 Tbsp raisins

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat 3 Tbsp ghee in a wide, heavy pan. Add the carrots and cook for 5–7 minutes, stirring.
2. Add the milk. Simmer over medium heat, stirring often, for 35–45 minutes, until most of the milk is absorbed.
3. Add the sugar. It will loosen the mixture. Cook for 8–10 minutes more, until thick.
4. Stir in the cardamom, saffron, nuts, raisins and the last spoonful of ghee. Serve warm.

Tip: Keeps in the fridge for 4 days. Reheat until steaming before eating.

SNACKS AND SWEETS

Saffron rice kheer

Replaces the chilled chia pudding and coconut flan. A warm rice pudding is soft, soothing and easy to digest.

From day 1 | Serves 4 | India



INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 cup white basmati rice
- 4 cups whole milk (or unsweetened almond or oat milk)
- 1/4 cup sugar or 3 Tbsp maple syrup
- 1/4 tsp ground cardamom
- Pinch of saffron, soaked in 1 Tbsp warm milk
- 1 tsp ghee
- 2 Tbsp sliced almonds
- 1 Tbsp raisins or chopped dates

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Rinse the rice and soak it for 20 minutes. Drain.
2. Bring the milk to a boil in a heavy pot. Add the rice and lower the heat.
3. Simmer for 35–45 minutes, stirring often so it doesn't stick, until the rice is very soft and the milk has thickened. Plant milks cook down faster, so check them early.
4. Stir in the sugar, cardamom and saffron. Cook for 5 minutes.
5. Fry the almonds and raisins in the ghee until golden. Spoon over the kheer and serve warm.

SNACKS AND SWEETS

Moghli (spiced rice pudding)

Families in Lebanon make moghli to celebrate a new baby. It's usually served cold, but here it's served warm.

From week 2 | Serves 6 | Lebanon



INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup rice flour
- 7 cups water, divided
- 1/2–3/4 cup sugar
- 1 Tbsp ground caraway
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp ground anise
- 1/2 tsp ground ginger

To top

- Unsweetened shredded coconut
- Chopped walnuts, pistachios and almonds

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Whisk the rice flour into 2 cups cold water until smooth.
2. Pour into a pot with the remaining 5 cups water, the sugar and spices.
3. Bring to a boil over medium heat, whisking constantly.
4. Lower the heat. Cook for 30–40 minutes, stirring often, until it's as thick as pudding and coats a spoon heavily.
5. Ladle into bowls and top with coconut and nuts. Serve warm.

Tip: Traditional toppings include nuts soaked in water. Soak them for an hour if you'd like them softer.

SNACKS AND SWEETS

Black sesame soup

A warm, nutty dessert soup that's often served in the Chinese postpartum month.

From week 2 | Serves 4 | China



INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup black sesame seeds
- 1/4 cup sweet (glutinous) rice flour
- 3 cups water
- 3–4 Tbsp brown sugar or rock sugar
- Pinch of salt
- 1 tsp ghee or coconut oil (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Toast the sesame seeds in a dry pan over medium-low heat for 3–5 minutes, until fragrant and a few start to pop. Black seeds hide burning, so go by smell.
2. Let cool. Grind into a fine powder in a spice grinder.
3. Whisk the rice flour into the water in a pot until smooth. Add the sesame powder, sugar and salt.
4. Bring to a simmer, stirring constantly. Cook for 5–8 minutes, until smooth and thickened.
5. For a silkier soup, blend it. Stir in the ghee and serve hot.

SNACKS AND SWEETS

Kachi (saffron halva pudding)

A soft, pourable saffron pudding that's traditionally given to new parents in Iran.

From day 1 | Serves 4 | Iran



INGREDIENTS

Syrup

- 2 cups water
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/4 tsp ground saffron, bloomed in 2 Tbsp hot water
- 1/2 tsp ground cardamom
- 1 Tbsp rosewater

Pudding

- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/3 cup ghee
- Slivered almonds and pistachios, to top

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Simmer the water and sugar for 3 minutes, until the sugar dissolves. Turn off the heat. Stir in the saffron, cardamom and rosewater. Keep warm.
2. Toast the flour in a dry, heavy pan over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, for 8–10 minutes, until golden.
3. Add the ghee and stir for 2–3 minutes into a smooth paste.
4. Slowly pour in the warm syrup while whisking. It will spatter. Cook for 3–5 minutes, whisking, until thick and glossy but still pourable.
5. Pour into bowls, top with nuts and serve warm.

Warm drinks and teas

Something warm to sip during every feed.

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Atmit (warm oat porridge drink)

A thin, warm drink traditionally made for new parents. Families often use barley or oat flour; this version uses oats.

From day 1 | Serves 3–4 | Ethiopia and Eritrea



INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup oat flour (or rolled oats blended into flour)
- 3 cups cold water
- 1 cup milk
- 1 Tbsp ghee or niter kibbeh (spiced butter)
- 1/4 tsp ground cardamom
- Pinch of salt
- 2 Tbsp honey

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Whisk the oat flour into the cold water in a pot until smooth.
2. Bring to a simmer, whisking. Cook for 8–10 minutes, until slightly thick and the raw flour taste is gone.
3. Whisk in the milk, ghee, cardamom and salt. Heat until steaming.
4. Let cool until it's comfortable to drink, then stir in the honey.

Total body nourishment tea

A mineral-rich blend made more warming with cinnamon and ginger. Lemon balm is cooling, so it's cut back.

From day 1 | Makes a jar of blend | BirthX classic, revised



INGREDIENTS

- 2 parts oat straw
- 2 parts nettle leaf
- 1 part alfalfa leaf
- 1 part rose hips
- 1 part lemon balm
- 1 part cinnamon chips
- 1/2 part dried ginger root

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Mix the herbs and store them in a jar.
2. For tea: steep 1 Tbsp blend in 1 cup boiling water, covered, for 5–10 minutes. Strain and drink warm.
3. For an infusion: steep 1/4 cup blend in 1 quart boiling water, covered, for 4–8 hours. Strain and warm it gently before drinking.

Ajwain water

A strong, thyme-like seed water traditionally given after birth for gas and bloating.

From day 1 | Serves 1–2 | India



INGREDIENTS

- 1 tsp ajwain (carom) seeds
- 2 cups water
- 1 tsp jaggery or honey (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Boil the seeds in the water for about 5 minutes, until reduced to about 1½ cups.
2. Strain and let cool until it's comfortable to drink. Stir in jaggery or honey if you like. Sip warm.

Tip: It's potent. Start with half a cup a day.

Red date and ginger tea

A gently sweet tea of red dates (jujubes) and ginger, sipped throughout the Chinese postpartum month.

From day 1 | Makes 1 quart | China



INGREDIENTS

- 8 dried red dates (jujubes), slit or halved
- 4 slices fresh ginger
- 4 cups water
- 1 Tbsp goji berries (optional)
- Brown sugar, to taste (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Put the dates, ginger and water in a pot. Bring to a boil.
2. Simmer, partly covered, for 20–30 minutes. Add the goji berries for the last 5 minutes.
3. Sweeten if you like. Sip warm, and eat the soft dates.

Atole de avena (warm oat drink)

A thick, cinnamon-scented oat drink served to new parents during la cuarentena.

From day 1 | Serves 3–4 | Mexico



INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup old-fashioned oats
- 2 cups water
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 2 cups milk (whole, or unsweetened oat or almond)
- 3 Tbsp piloncillo or brown sugar
- 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
- Pinch of salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Simmer the oats, water and cinnamon stick for 10 minutes.
2. Take out the cinnamon stick. Blend until smooth if you like it silky.
3. Return to the pot with the milk, sugar, vanilla and salt. Simmer for 5 minutes, stirring. Serve hot.

WARM DRINKS AND TEAS

Golden milk

Warm milk with turmeric and spices. A cozy cup for nighttime feeds.

From day 1 | Serves 1 | India



INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup milk (whole, or unsweetened almond or oat)
- 1/2 tsp ground turmeric
- 1/4 tsp ground ginger
- 1/4 tsp ground cinnamon
- Pinch each of black pepper and cardamom
- 1 tsp ghee
- 1–2 tsp maple syrup or honey

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Whisk everything except the sweetener in a small pot. Simmer for 3–5 minutes.
2. Pour into a mug. Stir in the maple syrup, or add honey once it's cool enough to drink.

Lahsun doodh (garlic milk)

Garlic simmered in milk until mellow and sweet. It's a traditional drink for lactating parents in parts of India.

From day 1 | Serves 1 | India



INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup whole milk (or unsweetened oat milk)
- 1/4 cup water
- 2–3 garlic cloves, peeled and lightly crushed
- Pinch of ground turmeric
- 1 tsp jaggery or sugar (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Put everything in a small pot and bring to a simmer.
2. Cook gently for about 10 minutes, until the garlic is soft and the water has cooked off.
3. Strain, or eat the soft garlic too. Drink warm.

Warm spiced pistachio milk

Adapted from Sahara Rose Ketabi's spiced pistachio milk in Eat Feel Fresh (see Sources). It's now served warm instead of straight from the fridge.

From week 2 | Makes 4 servings | BirthX classic, revised



INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup raw pistachios
- 4 cups water
- 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp ground cardamom
- 1/4 tsp ground ginger
- 1/4 tsp fennel seeds
- 1/8 tsp ground cloves
- 1/8 tsp sea salt
- 1–2 Tbsp maple syrup (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Soak the pistachios for 6–8 hours or overnight. Drain and rinse.
2. Blend everything in a high-speed blender until smooth. Strain through a nut milk bag, squeezing out all the liquid.
3. Warm a serving gently in a small pot until steaming, without boiling. Refrigerate the rest for up to 4 days and warm each cup before drinking.

Warm date almond milk

Adapted from Jenna Furnari's date almond shake (see Sources). It now has fewer dates and is served warm.

From week 2 | Serves 2–3 | BirthX classic, revised



INGREDIENTS

- 25 whole raw almonds
- 6–8 Medjool dates, pitted
- 1 tsp fennel seeds
- 1½ cups hot (not boiling) water
- 1½ cups milk (coconut, almond, oat or whole)
- 1/4 tsp ground cardamom

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Soak the almonds overnight, then peel off the skins. Soak the dates and fennel seeds in a separate bowl for 1 hour.
2. Drain everything. Blend with the hot water until very smooth.
3. Pour into a small pot with the milk and cardamom. Warm gently until steaming. Drink warm.

Womb love tea blend

We removed peach leaf (no lactation safety data), red clover (contains plant estrogens) and chamomile, and added warming fennel, cinnamon and ginger.

From day 1 | Makes a jar of blend | BirthX classic, revised



INGREDIENTS

- 3 parts red raspberry leaf
- 2 parts nettle leaf
- 1 part fennel seeds
- 1 part cinnamon chips
- 1/2 part dried ginger root
- 1/2 part rose petals (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Mix the herbs and store them in a jar.
2. For tea: steep 1 Tbsp blend in 1 cup boiling water, covered, for 5–10 minutes. Strain and drink warm.
3. For an infusion: steep 1/4 cup blend in 1 quart boiling water, covered, for 4–8 hours. Strain and warm it gently before drinking.

CCF tea (cumin, coriander and fennel)

A classic Ayurvedic tea for digestion. Sip it warm through the day.

From day 1 | Makes 1 quart | India · Ayurveda



INGREDIENTS

- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 tsp coriander seeds
- 1 tsp fennel seeds
- 4 cups water

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Bring everything to a boil in a small pot.
2. Simmer for 5–10 minutes. Strain into a thermos to keep it warm.

AT THE BACK

Resources

Helplines, support and tools for the weeks after birth.

Get help now

- **Emergency:** call **911** for chest pain, trouble breathing, a seizure, or thoughts of hurting yourself or your baby.
- **National Maternal Mental Health Hotline:** call or text **1-833-TLC-MAMA (1-833-852-6262)**. Free, confidential, 24/7, in English and Spanish.
- **Postpartum Support International HelpLine:** call or text **1-800-944-4773** · postpartum.net
- **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:** call or text **988** · 988lifeline.org

Feeding support

- **Find an IBCLC** · uslca.org
  A free directory of board-certified lactation consultants across the U.S.
- **La Leche League USA** · llusa.org
  Free parent-to-parent breastfeeding and chestfeeding support, in person and online.
- **LactMed** · ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
  A free NIH database on medicines, herbs and supplements while lactating.
- **WIC** · fns.usda.gov/wic
  Healthy foods, nutrition help and feeding support for eligible families.

Healing and recovery

- **Find a pelvic health PT** · aptapelvichealth.org
  APTA Pelvic Health's PT Locator, for leaking, pain, prolapse and recovery after birth.
- **POST-BIRTH warning signs** · awhonn.org
  The warning signs every new parent and support person can learn.
- **Postpartum Support International** · postpartum.net
  Free support groups, local coordinators and a directory of trained providers.

Food and help at home

- **Meal Train** · mealtrain.com
  Set up a meal sign-up and share this book with it.
- **Take Them a Meal** · takethemeal.com
  Another free way to organize meal drop-offs.
- **FoodKeeper** · foodsafety.gov
  USDA's guide to how long food keeps in the fridge and freezer.
- **Advice about eating fish** · fda.gov
  FDA's chart of the best low-mercury choices.

From BirthX

- **BirthX** · birthx.org
  Free, evidence-based guides on pregnancy, birth and postpartum.
- **BirthX Reviews** · birthx.reviews
  Review your maternity care and help the next family choose.

AT THE BACK

Sources

Every health claim in this book traces back to one of these sources.

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BirthX

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Heal your body after birth

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