

Food as Medicine: Postpartum Energy

A source for obtaining adequate **protein, iron** and **vitamin B12**

Protein

Eating one source of protein with each meal and snack throughout the day will help to maintain your blood sugar level and fight against inconvenient crashes. Many complete and adequate sources of protein, like quinoa, can be made in bulk to have readily available throughout your week. Protein rich foods and combinations include:

- Lentils
- Quinoa
- Hummus with veggies or pita bread
- Hardboiled/hard steamed eggs
- Beans
- Nuts and seeds
- Whole grain bread with nut butter

Iron

The blood lost during childbirth can contribute to postpartum fatigue, exhaustion, depression, and low milk supply. Quick-steaming kale or Swiss chard, eating a teaspoon of blackstrap molasses, or grabbing a prune or pear on the go will help to replenish your iron supply while combating fatigue. Iron rich foods include:

- Miso
- Pears
- Prunes
- Beet juice
- Grass-finished beef
- Dark green leafy vegetables
- Blackstrap molasses

Vitamin B12

Vitamin B12 deficiencies are most prevalent in strict vegetarians or vegans, as meat and fish are among the highest sources. However because vitamin B12 is well stored in our liver, it may take 3-5 years to develop a deficiency. The use for vitamin B12 in our body increases as our stress levels increase. Therefore if you have been eating a vegan diet for a few years, on top of the stress of being a new mother, you may be at risk. If you fall under this category, consider the following vitamin B12 rich foods or talking to your doctor about methylated vitamin B12 injections or supplementation.

Vegan

- Nutritional yeast
- Shiitake mushrooms
- Fortified foods, such as nut milks

Non-vegan

- Grass-finished beef
- Salmon
- Eggs



Picture by Jenna Bee Nutrition
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References

Jacobson H. *Mother Food*. Rosalind Press; 2004.
The National University of Natural Medicine
Linus Pauling Institute. <http://lpi.oregonstate.edu>

Postpartum Buddha Bowl with Homemade 3-Ingredient Tahini Sauce

Prep time 5 minutes | Cook time 15 minutes | Serves 2-4 | Tahini sauce sourced from the Minimalist Baker; minimalistbaker.com

FREE OF GLUTEN, SOY, EGGS, NUTS

Bowl Ingredients

- 1 cup canned chickpeas
- 1 cup quinoa
- 2 cups water
- Leafy green vegetables of choice such as kale, collard greens, or Swiss chard
- Other vegetables of choice such as mushrooms, broccoli, and/or cauliflower

Sauce Ingredients

- 1/2 cup tahini
- 1/4 tsp sea salt, plus more to taste
- 1/4 tsp garlic powder
- 1/4 cup warm water, plus more as needed

Directions

1. In a medium pot bring 2 cups water and 1 cup quinoa to a boil. Reduce heat, cover, and let simmer for 15 minutes or until all water is absorbed.
2. In the mean time, chop and steam vegetables of choice.
3. Add tahini, sea salt, and garlic powder to small mixing bowl and whisk to combine. Add water a little at a time, continuing to whisk, until you have a creamy, pourable sauce. Taste and adjust seasoning as needed.
4. Once the quinoa is done cooking, combine it with vegetables and chickpeas in a large bowl.
5. Serve tahini sauce over Postpartum Buddha Bowl and enjoy!

Notes

- This sauce will keep in an air-tight container in the fridge for 1-2 weeks.
- This sauce is versatile and recommended for use over salads, wraps, sandwiches, or burgers.
- Option for pre-made sauce: Simple Truth Organic Goddess Dressing (*contains soy*)

