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Five Healthy Eating Tips for New Moms and Moms-to-Be for National Nutrition Month®

Ryan Health Network Encourages Women to Learn More About the Women Infants and Children (WIC) Program for Access to Free Nutritious Food

NEW YORK (March 5, 2018) –March marks the observance of [National Nutrition Month®](#) and given that good nutrition plays a critical role in the healthy growth and development of infants and children, the [William F. Ryan Community Health Network](#), a family of health centers delivering care to communities throughout Manhattan, is sharing healthy eating tips that pregnant women and new moms should be mindful of as they adjust to caring for themselves and their child.

With [over 116,000 babies](#) born annually in New York City, new moms may not be aware of how to improve their diet for maximum nutritional benefit for themselves and their infants. In NYC maternal and infant morbidity and mortality disproportionately affect women of color, making nutrition even more important for this population. The five tips, which include food items [the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children \(WIC\)](#) provides, are as follows:

- 1) **Increase your fiber intake:** Select whole grains such as whole-wheat bread, brown rice, corn maize kernels, quinoa, barley, millet, amaranth or steel cut oatmeal.
- 2) **Eat colorful vegetables:** Add at least one dark green, red or orange vegetable at each meal.
- 3) **Choose water first:** Avoid sugary drinks, juices, Gatorade, and soda.
- 4) **Cooked foods are best:** Heat all deli meats to a sizzle and avoid eating raw, unpasteurized foods such as soft cheeses, sushi, and raw tofu.
- 5) **Eat balanced meals:** Fill half your “plate” with fruits and vegetables, and the other half with proteins such as beans, chicken, eggs, low-mercury seafood, low-fat dairy, nuts, or seeds *and* whole grains to ensure a nutrient-rich meal.

“It is so important for new moms and moms-to-be to focus on their nutrition and make health a priority. However, it does not have to be overwhelming. Small changes can lead to big improvements,” says Helene Rosenhouse-Romeo, Director of WIC and Nutrition, Ryan Health

Network. “We encourage all women to find out if they qualify for the WIC program to receive free foods, health care referrals, breastfeeding support, and nutrition education and counseling. The WIC program has consistently proven to be effective in improving the health outcomes of women and children,”.

WIC is a federally funded program that provides healthy foods and nutrition education to families with limited incomes. Eligibility is based on both family income and the health risks of the mother and child(ren). Families do not have to be citizens to qualify. To learn more about whether you qualify for WIC benefits, please call Ryan-NENA Community Health Center, located on the Lower East Side, at (212) 477-8846 or The Ryan Women & Children’s Center, located on the Upper West Side, at (212) 865-0410.

About the William F. Ryan Community Health Network

[The William F. Ryan Community Health Network](#) is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) that has provided high quality, affordable, and culturally and linguistically competent, primary, preventive, and specialty healthcare and support services to diverse and underserved communities for 50 years. Today, the six Manhattan primary service sites, seven school-based health centers, five community residence sites and fully-equipped mobile medical van, which together comprise the William F. Ryan Community Health Network, share a common mission, supported by the founding principle that healthcare is a right, not a privilege. The organization is nationally recognized for its history of responsive and successful community-wide programming and impressive proficiency in the area of service expansion and community collaboration.

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