

Meeting the Increased Demand for Iodine in

Pregnant and Lactating Mothers

- Pregnant ladies and lactating mothers have an increased demand of folate, iron, zinc and iodine.
- Pregnant ladies need to take food rich in iodine to ensure normal growth and brain development of the fetus and an adequate fetal store.
- Breastmilk provides a good source of iodine for young baby. The iodine level varies with the mother's diet. Therefore, lactating mother should consume iodine rich food.
- World Health Organization (WHO) recommends a iodine intake of 250µg per day for pregnant and lactating mothers.
- Examples of food rich in iodine:
 - ✓ Seaweeds (including kelp and seaweed) are the richest in iodine. You do not need to eat a large amount of seaweeds.
 - ✓ Seafood (including marine fish, prawns, mussels, oyster, etc.), egg yolk, milk and milk products.
- The usual daily intake of seafood, eggs, and milk products may not provide sufficient amount of iodine required for pregnancy or lactation.
- On top of eating a balanced diet, a pregnant lady or lactating mother can take 5 small packets (each packet weighs 1.1g) or 2 medium packets (each weighs 2.5-3g) of seaweed snack to obtain adequate iodine. Check the nutrition label on the package to help you choose one with lower fat and sodium content. Or occasionally cook the rice or congee with a small piece of kelp to increase iodine intake
- You may also use iodized salt to replace ordinary table salt. Add the

iodized salt at the time when food is served.

- You may choose to take an iodine containing supplement. Seek advice from doctor, registered pharmacist or registered dietitian.
- Examples of iodine content of iodine-rich food

Food	Portion	Iodine content (µg)
Sea fish	1kg	190
Prawn	100g	44
Oyster	100g	83
Mussel	100g	140
Skimmed milk	250ml	20
Cheddar cheese	1slice (around20g)	5
Yogurt	100g	29
Egg	Whole egg with yolk (around 60g)	20