

Section 7.1: Introduction

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The WIC food packages provide supplemental foods designed to meet the special nutritional needs of lower-income pregnant, breastfeeding, non-breastfeeding postpartum women, infants and children up to five years of age who are at nutritional risk. WIC food packages and nutrition education are the chief means by which WIC affects the dietary quality and habits of participants, and ultimately their health.

The WIC food packages are determined by USDA based on recommendations from the National Academies of Sciences, and provide WIC participants with a variety of nutritious foods. The food packages align with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and current infant feeding practice guidelines of the American Academy of Pediatrics. It is especially important that WIC staff understand how the food packages better promote and support the establishment of successful long-term breastfeeding.

This chapter will identify the foods available through WIC, the various food packages available to different categories of participants, and the process of prescribing a food package.

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