

## WIC: For Healthy Moms and Kids

What is WIC? WIC is the Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition Program designed to protect and improve the health of women, infants, and children up to age 5 by providing a variety of essential services. More than half of U.S. infants participate in WIC – keep reading to find out if you may be eligible and how you and your family can benefit from WIC services!

When you think of WIC, you probably think of food benefits. WIC participants are provided financial assistance to purchase foods designed to supplement diets with specific nutrients. Authorized WIC foods include infant cereal, baby foods, fruits and vegetables, iron-fortified breakfast cereals, whole-grain options, milk and other dairy products, eggs, vitamin C-rich fruit or vegetable juice, and other healthy foods. WIC also provides iron-fortified infant formula to non-exclusively breastfeeding moms. WIC now utilizes an EBT card to transfer food benefits, making it easier than ever to use benefits while shopping.

Getting healthy food is only half of the journey to healthy eating. You can receive professional nutritional education from our Registered Dietician to learn how to use your WIC-approved foods to supplement your diet. In a face-to-face meeting, you can work directly with the Registered Dietitian on how to adopt healthier eating and nutrition practices in a way that fits your needs, including tips on planning healthy meals and shopping on a budget. WIC gives you access to professional nutrition services that would normally cost hundreds of dollars, all as part of the benefits program!

Breast milk is the healthiest food for your baby, but breastfeeding isn't easy for every new mom. If you are struggling with breastfeeding, WIC can provide you with support, guidance, and educational materials. As you prepare to return to work or school, you can learn how to continue breastfeeding and how to obtain and use a breast pump. Breastfeeding moms are also eligible to receive additional food benefits to support their health.

In addition to these services, WIC can provide you with information on doctors, dentists, FoodShare, Head Start, BadgerCare+, immunization screening and referrals, substance abuse referrals, and more.

In Washburn County, the WIC clinic is housed at the Washburn County Health Department, located in Spooner. You may be eligible for WIC benefits if:

- You live in Wisconsin
- You are pregnant, breastfeeding, or have had a baby in the past six months
- You have an infant or children under age 5
- You or your children have a health or nutrition need
- You meet WIC income guidelines

Many working families qualify for WIC. You are income eligible if you participate in free and reduced-price school lunches, Kinship Care, W-2, or FoodShare. You may be income eligible if you receive Medicaid or BadgerCare+. Fathers, guardians, or foster parents may also apply for WIC for their children. **For questions about WIC and how to apply for WIC benefits, call the Washburn County Health Department at 715-635-4400.**