



# *The Empowered Mother's Guide to* **Losing the Baby Weight**

*Breastfeed. Hike. Eat Real Food and  
Lose the Baby Weight in  
6 months or less*

Cara Comini *of* Health, Home, & Happiness

# *Index*

---

Intro .....	2
Gaining While Pregnant.....	3
Exercise While Pregnant.....	4
The Six Weeks After Birth .....	5
Breast Feeding and Nutrition.....	6
About That Hunger... ..	7
Calorie Counting.....	8
Exercise.....	10
Portion Size .....	11
Snacking .....	12
Sample Days.....	12
Healthier Choices for the Nursing Mom .....	13
Menus.....	15-19
Sleep .....	20
Cheat Days and Hungry Days.....	21
Food Allergy Avoidance.....	22
3 Super Foods for Weight Loss While Breastfeeding.....	23
Mood Improvement.....	24
Judgement Releasing.....	25
You're at Your Goal Weight - Now What? .....	26
Maintaining Weight Loss While Nursing.....	26
Maintaining Weight Loss After Weaning .....	27
Other Issues .....	28
Family Habits.....	30
Weekly/Daily Checklist for Weight Loss.....	32

- Your body learns to use fat for energy and responds with a delightfully even mood.
- You desire the, ahem, bedroom activities with the enthusiasm of your honeymoon week.
- Your baby is free from eczema and excess crankiness, because you have easily eliminated food allergies from your breast milk.
- You are able to shed the excess water weight that inflammation causes, which will take puffiness out of your face, and all over – in 4 days.

---

*With every bite that you put in your mouth, these are your choices. There's no reason to wait until Monday to start, to wait until after the holidays, or to wait until you have extra money to join a gym. If you've recovered from childbirth as described in the previous chapter, start now. No more hemming and hawing, go ahead and start with the next bite you put in your mouth, and make good choices.*

To figure out your calorie needs, head over to the free website [myfitnesspal.com](http://myfitnesspal.com) and fill out a profile with your height and activity level using **your goal weight as your actual and goal weight, and your desired weight loss as 'maintain'**.

We just want a base amount of how many calories you will need to maintain your weight when you're at your goal weight, and then we'll use the 400-500 calories burned by breastfeeding as the deficit that allows you to lose weight. That's the beauty of doing this during breastfeeding, you get to eat 'non-diet' portions, and still lose the weight!

See the [resources page](#) for why fat is good and how documentation on how many calories are burned by breastfeeding.

---

*Sometimes it feels like we're running around all the time after our kids, but this is more because we are constantly distracted and interrupted, not because we are actually \*running\*. In general, especially when we're nursing a young infant, our activity level is sedentary. That's okay! We'll gain energy and get out more as our babies get older and more interested in the world around them.*

We are going to aim to lose 1- 1.5 pounds a week by using the extra calorie burned with breastfeeding. If we lose 1.5 pounds a week, from 6 weeks postpartum until our baby is 6 months old, that's a total weight loss of 39 lbs. If we lose one pound on average, that's a weight loss of 26 lbs. In either case, this is looking good, isn't it?

Most of you will come up with a base calorie use of 1500-2000 calories per day. These are your goal calories for the time you're losing weight - with the exception of 'hungry days' as we talked about in the previous chapter.

---

*If you meet your goal weight, you can move to the chapter on maintaining weight loss through breastfeeding, and then the changes you'll need to make as you wean.*

---

## Exercise

---

Exercise is best seen as a way to enjoy yourself, lift your mood, and gain strength – all without being tempted to pop into the kitchen to eat. When we pack food and go for a walk or a hike, we know that we will be sticking to our food plan. Walking different paths or hiking different trails gives us a change of scenery. Exercising with our children, spouse, or a friend builds relationships. Even 20 minutes on the treadmill while the baby naps or Dad's home can get the blood moving, help us to feel more awake, and suppress our appetite.

The couple hundred calories we burn during an afternoon's outdoor activities can help contribute to our weight loss, but we want to avoid the trap of eating more than we need and rationalizing that we'll burn it off later.

### Some ways to get some exercise in:

- Hike. This is my personal favorite, every free weekend from when my baby was 3 months old all the way through summer, I put him in the Ergo Baby Carrier, put a backpack on my back filled with water, Lara bars in case we got hungry, and rain ponchos in case of an unexpected storm, and I tackled a new trail with my children.
- Row, paddleboard, or play water games with the kids. Water provides resistance, and for children, having a mom play water games with them is priceless!
- Walk. If you have one or two that can go in a double stroller, taking long 'destination walks' is a nice addition to the day's activities. When my first two were babies and toddlers, I would walk to a park that was 1-2 miles away, and we'd eat lunch there