

Good Nutrition Should Start With Birth

(NAPSA)—If you are a new or expectant mom, then you already know how important calcium, iron and folic acid are to you and your baby. But are you aware of the benefits of docosahexaenoic acid, commonly known as DHA?

DHA, an omega-3 long chain polyunsaturated fatty acid, is one of the important building blocks of human brain tissue and the central nervous system. Mom provides DHA to baby during pregnancy. After baby is born, breast milk is the primary source of DHA. It is important for moms to have good levels of DHA in their own bodies, during lactation, so that the nutrient can be passed on to baby. Good sources of DHA for mom during pregnancy and lactation are egg yolks and oily fish such as tuna, salmon and sardines.

“DHA is an important nutrient throughout life. But it’s especially vital during early childhood when the mind and body are still developing,” advises Christine Wood, M.D., pediatrician and author of *How to Get Kids to Eat Great and Love It!* “Recent studies have shown that DHA and ARA (arachidonic acid) are important for a child’s developing mind and vision throughout the first two years of life.” Research is continuing to explore and explain the importance of DHA in the diets of nursing infants and toddlers.

Now, for the first time, DHA is available in a line of jarred baby foods! Beech-Nut Nutrition Corp. recently introduced Beech-Nut® First Advantage™, the first line of baby food with the two important fatty acids, DHA and ARA. Beech-Nut First Advantage is available in 13 delicious flavors including Cinnamon Raisin Granola with Pears, Sweet Potato Soufflé and Peaches, Oatmeal and Cinnamon. You can find First Advantage at your local grocer or online at www.beech-nut.com/FA.

“First Advantage is more than a unique new baby food, it is a true advance in infant nutrition,” notes Dr. Wood. “It offers parents a convenient, nutritious way to make sure their babies continue to receive DHA by providing these fatty acids in a solid food diet.”

First Advantage is part of a nutritious start for baby. Here are a few tips on nutrition based on your baby’s stage of development.

• **You Are What Your Mommy Eats (pre-natal)**—A varied and



nutritious diet with plenty of DHA, calcium, folic acid, fiber and iron is recommended for the expectant mom.

• **Breast is Best (0 to 2 years)**—Breast milk is the most perfect source of human nutrition. It provides your baby with antibodies to fight disease and infection, strengthens the bond between mother and child, and contains DHA, a nutrient linked to improved mental and visual development.

• **Eating Well from Day One (6 months to 12 months)**—The minute a child is introduced to solid foods, she begins to develop taste preferences and eating habits. Provide her with a good role model! Sit the family down every night and provide each member with a wholesome meal.

• **Brown Bagging It (3 years and up)**—Once children are ready for school, they are going to be faced with challenges to the healthy guidelines you have provided. Send healthy packed lunches to school most of the time to ensure a well-balanced meal.

Practicing good eating habits and providing your baby with the important nutrients she needs will get you one step closer to raising a happy, healthy child. “Many of the ailments that plague Americans at a younger and younger age can be attributed to a poor diet high in saturated fats and sugars, and low in important nutrients,” explains Dr. Wood. “DHA is proving to be one of these important nutrients and we are learning that DHA influences many aspects of health from birth to old age.”

For more information on DHA, Beech-Nut First Advantage and infant nutrition, log on to www.beech-nut.com/FA.