

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT WIC IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY CONTACT:

ACHD WIC PROGRAM

2121 Noblestown Road
Suite 210
Pittsburgh, PA 15205
www.achd.net/wic
Phone: 412-350-5801 | Fax: 412-350-4424



*PA WIC is funded by USDA.
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.*

A11-0920



What is WIC? A Guide for Professionals



ACHD WIC PROGRAM

Serving the families of Allegheny County since 1974

What is WIC?

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, more commonly known as WIC, is administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Pennsylvania Department of Health, and the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) locally. WIC provides eligible individuals with nutritious foods to supplement their diets during critical periods of growth and development.

Who is eligible?

- Pregnant women
- Women breastfeeding an infant up to one (1) year of age
- Postpartum women bottle feeding an infant up to six (6) months of age
- Infants and children up to the age of five (5)

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Have a household income that does not exceed 185% of the U.S. Poverty Income Guidelines. Because of the WIC Program's liberal income guidelines, many working families qualify for WIC. Individuals and families that receive Medical Assistance, TANF or SNAP (formerly food stamps) are automatically income-eligible.
- Medical or nutritional risk factors determined by the USDA
- Must be a resident of Pennsylvania.

WIC does **NOT** require proof of citizenship.

To determine eligibility, WIC needs:

- A completed online pre-application from www.pawic.com; or
- A paper application completed by a health care provider that includes:
 - ◇ Current bloodwork (i.e., HGB/HCT value) less than 45 days old
 - ◇ Current anthropometrics less than 45 days old
 - ◇ Documentation of any risk factors based on medical or obstetrical history
- Paper applications may be obtained by visiting www.achd.net/wic/apply or by calling 412-350-5801
- Upon receipt of application, WIC staff will contact the applicant to schedule an appointment



Has WIC made a difference?

Studies to measure the impact of the WIC Program over the last 40 years have found that participation in WIC results in:

- Lowered health care costs
- Improved quality of participants' diets
- Improved weight gain in pregnant women
- Reduced incidence of low birth weight
- Reduced premature delivery
- Reduced infant deaths
- Reduced incidence of childhood anemia
- Improved rates of childhood immunization
- Improved cognitive skills in children
- Decreased obesity among young children in Allegheny County

How can you help potentially WIC-eligible individuals?

- Refer them to the WIC Program. A custodial father, foster parent or legal guardian may receive WIC benefits for a child under the age of five (5).
- Refer them to www.pawic.com and encourage them to get started by completing the online WIC pre-application
- Complete a medical paper application when appropriate
- Encourage them to keep their WIC appointments

What nutrients does WIC provide?

A selection of nutritious foods is provided. WIC participants receive an average of \$60 worth of foods per month.

Nutrient	WIC foods that supply the nutrient
Protein	Milk, eggs, cheese, peanut butter, legumes (beans), canned fish
Iron	WIC-allowed brands of cereal, legumes (beans) and eggs
Vitamin C	WIC-allowed juices (citrus juice and juice fortified with Vitamin C), fruits and vegetables
Vitamin A	Milk, eggs, fruits and vegetables, canned fish
Calcium	Milk, yogurt, cheese, soy products
Fiber	Fruits and vegetables, legumes (beans), whole grains, whole grain cereals

Is WIC just a food program?

No. In addition to food, WIC also provides:

- Basic health assessment of current height, weight and hemoglobin
- Individualized nutrition counseling and goal-setting designed to influence lifetime nutrition and health behaviors
- Childhood immunization screenings
- Referrals to health and social service providers
- Breast pumps to mothers who meet WIC breast pump requirements
- Prenatal and postpartum breastfeeding counseling



Risk criteria for women

- Low hemoglobin or hematocrit
- High or low pre-pregnancy weight gain
- Weight loss during pregnancy
- High or low maternal weight gain
- High parity at a young age
- Less than 18 months between pregnancies
- Multi-fetal gestation
- Gestational diabetes or preeclampsia
- History of a low birth weight infant or preterm infant
- History of fetal or neonatal loss
- Age 17 or younger at conception
- Recent acute illness, major surgery or trauma
- Maternal smoking, alcohol or illegal drug use
- Medical conditions that affect nutritional status

Risk criteria for infants and children

- Low hemoglobin or hematocrit (ages 9 months and older)
- Lead levels ≥ 5 mcg/dl
- Prematurity or low birth weight
- Large or small for gestational age
- Inadequate growth or failure to thrive
- Congenital disorder, metabolic or chronic disease
- Recent major surgery, trauma or burns
- Infant of a WIC-eligible woman
- Use of specialized formula
- Overweight or underweight; inappropriate nutrition practices
- Acute illness requiring antibiotics
- Substance abuse by the parents or caregiver
- Mentally disabled caregiver
- Visible dental decay or early childhood caries
- Food allergies or intolerance

