



EXPLAINING WIC: A Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children

What is WIC?

- WIC is a special supplemental nutrition program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) through the New York State Department of Health.
- WIC helps low-income women buy food for themselves and for their children.

Who qualifies for WIC?

- You must be a
 - ◆ pregnant woman,
 - ◆ breastfeeding woman,
 - ◆ woman who just had a baby including:
 - those who breastfeed their babies
 - those who do not breastfeed their babies, or
 - ◆ an infant or child under the age of five.
- For women who qualify for WIC, you must also live in New York State, meet the [income guidelines](#), and want to improve your health and nutrition.

Do I need to be a U.S. citizen to receive WIC?

- No, you do not need to be a U.S. citizen to receive WIC benefits.

How do I apply for WIC?

- You must make an appointment to apply for WIC.
- You can make an appointment by calling your local agency that is listed on the [WIC website](#) or by calling the [Growing Up Healthy Hotline](#) at 1-800-522-5006. The Growing Up Healthy Hotline can help you find your local agency.
- It is free to enroll in the WIC program.

Do I need to bring any documents for my appointment when I apply for WIC?

- Yes, you must bring the following documents:
 - ◆ proof of identity for you and your child,
 - ◆ proof of household income,
 - ◆ proof of residency, and
 - ◆ immunization records for your child.
- Sample documents are listed in the link <https://www.health.ny.gov/publications/19044.pdf>.
- You may also need to bring any WIC medical forms that you were given by your healthcare provider.



What happens at the appointment when I apply for WIC?

- WIC staff will speak to you about nutrition and determine which food packages are right for you and your child.
- WIC staff will also conduct a health screening on all family members who are applying for WIC. This screening includes a finger stick blood test, height and weight measurements, and a discussion about your health.

What will I receive if I am approved for WIC?

- You will receive the following:
 - ◆ An eWIC card to purchase your and your children's WIC foods at WIC-approved stores,
 - ◆ A shopping list for WIC-approved foods for you and your children,
 - ◆ Referrals to medical care and services, and
 - ◆ Breastfeeding support.

After I am approved, how many years can I receive WIC?

- There is no year limit when WIC benefits end.
- Pregnant women can receive WIC until their pregnancy ends. Breastfeeding mothers can continue to receive WIC benefits until their child's first birthday. Mothers who are not breastfeeding may be eligible for WIC until their child is 6 months old.
- Infants and children may continue to receive WIC benefits until they turn 5 years old.
- A change in household income may also impact how long a recipient can benefit from WIC. WIC staff may ask you to bring income information to each appointment after approval.

Which foods can I purchase with WIC?

- Your personalized food package will be determined by WIC staff during your appointment and after you have been approved for WIC.
- However, WIC can only be used to purchase certain foods. These foods can only be purchased at stores that accept WIC.

Sources:

- <https://www.health.ny.gov/publications/4008/>
- https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/wic/how_to_apply.htm
- <https://www.health.ny.gov/publications/19044.pdf>
- https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/wic/local_agencies.htm
- https://www.health.ny.gov/community/pregnancy/health_care/prenatal/guh.htm
- <https://access.nyc.gov/programs/women-infants-and-children-wic/>
- <https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/wic-eligibility-requirements>