

Don't Eat Lasagna Every Day, Garfield

or How to Let Other People Help

1. Designate a "meal captain" and have them devise a meal management system or register for an online free tool, like www.mealbaby.com or something similar. These sites are so helpful because they let everyone see what everyone else is bringing, so you don't end up with six lasagnas in one week. It might sound like heaven now, Garfield, but talk to me on day four.
2. Give your food captain a list of things you would like to eat and things you would like to avoid. Be as specific as possible. Make sure they know how many people will be at your house during the first few weeks, and check in with those folks about their food preferences as well. If your mother is coming to stay with you, she deserves to eat, too.
3. Give your food captain an email list of all of the friends who are likely to bring you food. Note that many of these sites also allow far-away family and friends to send gift cards for places that offer take-out locally. If you are taking time away from work after baby is born, those gift cards are the BEST once you head back to paid work.
4. Obtain a large cooler to be left on the front porch when baby arrives. Make a sign that says "Thank you for taking the time to bring us a meal. We are resting right now and would love to see you in a couple of weeks. Please leave your name and contact information so that we can make an appointment to see you soon!" Don't be surprised if random neighbors, coworkers, or others bring you things, even on days when they weren't assigned to do so. Graciously accept everything by leaving the cooler out and don't worry about making them feel bad if you don't answer the door.
5. Consider asking for food on a longer schedule than just the first few weeks. I recommend the following:

Starting with the birthday, ask for one meal per day for the first 2 weeks.
Weeks 3 and 4, perhaps every other day or three meals per week.
Weeks 5 and 6, two meals per week.

If people are willing to help out, it might be nice to have a once-weekly drop off for much longer than just six weeks. Consider a weekly drop off for the first three months.

Thanks to Katie Wise at YoMama Yoga Boulder for sharing her ideas during our teacher training.
Many of these ideas were inspired by her experience.