When you become a new mom everything changes. Like, EVERYTHING. With your world turned so upside down it can be easy to put your own nutritional needs aside, but it’s a really, really important time to make sure that you’re getting the nutrients and the fuel that you need — especially if you’re breastfeeding and/or getting back into your workouts. To help with that, we’re sharing this guest post on nutrition for new moms from Kim Daly Farrell, a certified health coach, former magazine editor, fitness fanatic, and mom to Keane and Julia. Kim has worked for national media outlets, including Good Housekeeping, Glamour, and Shape, and health and fitness industry leaders, including MyFitnessPal and Fitbit. Currently, she’s calling the shots as CEO and founder of Mama Love, a nutrition company for lactating women who want to maximize their fitness gains without sabotaging breast milk safety, health, or supply. Talk about a Fit Bottomed Mama! Read on for Kim’s top tips when it comes to nutrition for new moms. When you’re pregnant, everyone loves to remind you about your baby when you lift a fork: “Have some more! You’re eating for two!” “Watch out for the mercury in that tuna — you’re eating for two.” And even if you did have weird cravings (cheap burritos and chocolate croissants for me), more than likely you made some really smart choices that helped your body grow a happy, healthy baby. Good job, Mama! When it comes to the post-partum period though, all those friendly voices seem to fade. And there are a lot of conflicting messages about what your body needs to look like, and how you should be fueling yourself. First of all, if you manage to have three meals and a snack or two in the haze of those no-sleep newborn days, you can pat yourself on the back. “Taking in enough calories and eating on a regular schedule is very important for new moms,” says Shivani Patel, M.D., a maternal-fetal medicine specialist and assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology at UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, Texas. “Your body needs nourishment to keep up with daily activities, and to repair and heal after delivery.” The post-partum period is not the time to go on a strict diet. Let’s look at that sentence again, because it’s an important one. No matter how many extra pounds you think you’re carrying after delivery, a new mom needs to eat. Skimping on food will only slow down the hormonal shift that allows your metabolism and energy-storage processes to get back to that there’s-no-baby-in-here state. And if you’re breastfeeding, not eating enough can sabotage your milk supply — because, yep, you’re still eating for two. Research shows lactating women need to take in about 500 extra calories per day to support breast milk production. “For most moms, an ideal range is 1,800 to 2,200 daily calories,” says Dr. Patel, “and a good portion of those calories need to provide protein.”