



Eating for Two

A Pregnant Woman's Healthy Eating Guide



Eating for Two Pregnancy & Nutrition

Congratulations on your pregnancy! Pregnancy can be an exciting and joyful event in your life but it can also be a confusing time. Your body is going through many changes. You now have to eat for two and make sure you get the best nutrition for you and your growing baby.

This booklet will answer common pregnancy and nutrition questions, and help guide you on making healthy diet and lifestyle choices so that your baby gets the best start in life. You will also find “A Pregnant Woman’s Healthy Diet: Guidelines” at the back of the booklet, which provides practical and useful information on how to get the most out of your diet.



Tip #1: Ways to Cope with Morning Sickness

Morning sickness and nausea are common problems for pregnant women. They usually occur during the early part of pregnancy and, in most cases, will go away after the first 3 months. But for some women, morning sickness and nausea may last longer or remain throughout the entire pregnancy.

The changes in your body cause you to become sick to your stomach when you smell or eat certain things, when you are tired or stressed, or for no reason at all. Nausea in early pregnancy is a condition that often can be managed by changing when and what you eat.

Severe nausea and vomiting in pregnancy is rare but it can be a problem because it causes water loss and weight loss. See your doctor if you feel that nausea and vomiting prevents you from eating right or gaining enough weight.

Tips for Morning Sickness

- Eat dry foods like rice porridge, breakfast cereal, popcorn, pretzels, or crackers early in the morning.
- Try not to brush teeth too early in the morning.
- Eat six to eight small meals with foods like pasta, rice, or toast instead of three large ones daily.
- Choose peanut butter, eggs, tofu, beans, or cheese if you can't eat meat
- Bring a small snack if you are going out.
- Drink fluids between meals instead of with meals.
- Avoid foods that are greasy, fried, or heavily spiced.
- Avoid foul and unpleasant odors.
- Avoid cigarette smoking, alcohol and caffeine
- Get fresh air and some exercise such as walking
- Rest when you are tired.
- Eat when you are hungry.

Tip #2: Drink a Lot of Water

As your body fluids increase during pregnancy, so does your need for fluids. Drink plenty of water, at least 6 to 8 cups a day. You should drink more if the weather is very hot.

Water is best, but you can also drink milk, fruit juice, vegetable juice, and soup. Keep in mind that fruit juice is higher in sugar and calories, while water has none. Avoid or limit caffeine-containing beverages such as coffee, tea and soft drinks.

Staying hydrated by drinking water has many health benefits. You can avoid early labor, and have more elastic skin. Drinking water can also help decrease annoying pregnancy symptoms such as constipation and swelling. Extra fluids help rid your body of toxins and waste products, and reduce the risk of urinary tract infections

Tip #3: Guidelines on How Much You Should Eat

When you are pregnant, your body will have greater demands due to the baby's growth and development. That's why pregnant women should eat more than they usually do. Weight gain is normal during pregnancy. While it is true that you are "eating for two" during pregnancy, that does not mean that you should simply double the amount of food you eat daily.

Recommendations

- ◆ **First 3 months** - Aim to get an extra 150 calories each day. It is as simple as drinking a glass of milk everyday during the first three months.
- ◆ **Remaining 6 months** - Aim for an extra 300 calories a day. It is as simple as eating a peanut butter or egg sandwich, or yogurt with fruit, or a cup of milk/soy milk fortified with calcium and crackers during the final six months.

Tip #4: Get Plenty of Vitamins & Minerals

Your body is growing a baby, and you need energy to take care of yourself and your baby. Vitamins and minerals help your body use the energy provided by foods. They also help repair and maintain cells and tissues (for more information about vitamins and minerals, see the next page).

Eating a well-balanced diet will provide the vitamins and minerals that you need. Keep in mind that too many nutrients can be harmful to your baby. Talk to your doctor to see if you need to make any changes to your diet and if you need to take a multi-vitamin.



Watch Your Salt!

You don't need to limit salt during pregnancy, but you should be careful of too much salt which can cause high blood pressure and extra weight gain. If you eat mainly fresh and natural foods, they can be safely salted "to taste." You should reduce or avoid salty foods, e.g., salted fish, preserved tofu paste or soy sauce.

Vitamins & Minerals That You & Your Baby Need

	Sources	Tips
Iron Helps give oxygen. Keeps immune system strong so your body can fight off germs.	Leafy green vegetables, citrus fruits, tomatoes, lean red meat, liver, poultry, fish, clams, and sardines.	Foods rich in vitamin C help your body absorb iron so you should eat a lot of fruits and vegetables which are good sources of vitamin C. Limit or avoid tea, soft drinks and ice-cream which have been shown to prevent your body from absorbing iron.
Folic Acid Important to a baby's growth. Helps prevent birth defects.	Leafy green vegetables, cantaloupe, orange juice, dried peas and beans, and whole grains.	Do not overcook foods rich in folic acid because heat destroys folic acid. Try steaming vegetables instead of boiling them. Don't cut and peel fruits and vegetables too much. Store prepared foods in tightly sealed containers in the refrigerator.
Calcium Keeps your bones strong. Important in baby's bone development.	Milk and dairy products, fortified soy milk and tofu.	If you do not consume milk or dairy products, it is recommended that you take a calcium supplement of 600 mg daily.
Vitamin D Helps body absorb calcium. Important for bone growth.	Vitamin D-fortified milk and sunlight.	If you don't drink milk or get little sunlight, you should take a vitamin D supplement (10 mg) daily.

Tip #5: Things to Watch Out For

Be Careful of What You Drink



Alcohol

Avoid drinking any alcoholic beverages while you are pregnant. Alcohol can be harmful to your baby because it can cause **Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS)**, a serious condition that can cause birth defects and mental retardation.

Caffeine

Caffeine is in soft drinks, coffee, tea, chocolate, cocoa, and some over-the-counter (OTC) and prescription drugs. If taken in large amounts, caffeine may cause irritability, nervousness, insomnia, and low-birth-weight babies. Caffeine can also rob your body of valuable water. Finally, some studies show that large amounts of caffeine during pregnancy can harm the baby. Until more is known about its effects, don't drink a lot of beverages that has caffeine.

Be Careful of What You Ingest



Smoking

Smoking harms your baby. When you smoke, your baby gets less oxygen. Not enough oxygen can cause your baby to grow more slowly and gain less weight. Smoking during pregnancy has also been linked to early labor and other complications.

Drugs & Herbs

Street drugs, over-the-counter drugs, prescription drugs, and some herbal preparations and medicine can hurt your baby. Some can cause birth defects, while others can cause your baby to be born too small or very sick. Check with your doctor before taking any prescription or over-the-counter drugs, herbal teas, pills, or other supplements.

Tip #5: Things to Watch Out For

Be Careful of What You Eat

Mercury

Mercury can damage many parts of the body. Babies who are exposed to mercury while in the womb can have severe damage to the nervous system and may die. They may have brain damage, learning disabilities and hearing loss.

Do not eat fish containing potentially high levels of mercury, such as **swordfish, shark, king mackerel** and **tile fish**. Also, try not to handle broken thermometers, fluorescent light bulbs, and high-intensity light bulbs, which also have potentially high levels of mercury.

Food Safety

Use common sense when selecting and preparing foods. It is recommended that you stay away from:

- Raw fish and shellfish (e.g., oysters, clams, mussels, etc.).
- Undercooked meat, poultry and seafood. Cook thoroughly to kill bacteria.
- Hot dog wieners, luncheon meats such as ham, or sausage. If you do eat them, reheat until they are steaming hot.
- Soft-scrambled eggs and all foods made with raw or lightly cooked eggs.
- Soft cheeses made with unpasteurized milk. Check the label to see what kind of milk was used to make the cheese.
- Unpasteurized milk and any foods made from it.
- Unpasteurized juices.
- Raw vegetable sprouts, including soy bean, radish and mung bean.
- Do not eat too much liver. It contains high amounts of vitamin A, which can lead to birth defects.



Tip #6: Watch Your Weight & Be Physically Active

Weight gain during pregnancy should be slow with most weight gained in the last 3 months. You should gain about 2-4 pounds during the first 3 months of pregnancy, and 3-4 pounds per month during the rest of your pregnancy. The total average weight a pregnant woman should gain is about 25-30 pounds.

How Much Weight Should You Gain?

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) has these guidelines:

- ◆ If you were **underweight** before becoming pregnant, you should gain between 28- 40 pounds.
- ◆ If you were **overweight** before becoming pregnant, you should gain between 15-25 pounds.

The amount you gain might be slightly less or more, depending on your height and weight before you became pregnant. Check with your doctor to find out how much weight gain during pregnancy is healthy for you.



Remember to be physically active. Pregnant women should exercise. Exercise has many benefits: increase a sense of well-being, maintain good health, and reduce stress during delivery. Pregnant women who exercise regularly also tend to enjoy their pregnancy more. Before you start any form of physical activity, see your doctor or midwife to see what is safe and right for you.

Tip #7: Keep an Open Mind About the Foods You Eat

Some women have traditional beliefs from their culture which affect the foods they eat and don't eat during pregnancy. Because of these beliefs, some pregnant women may avoid foods that they believe are bad for them when they may actually be good for them.

There is nothing wrong with following traditional beliefs, but you should also keep an open mind. Don't hold back from eating various nutritious foods during your pregnancy. If you choose not to eat certain foods, talk to a dietitian or doctor to make sure you are eating enough foods rich in nutrients and that you are following a balanced diet to help you deliver a healthy baby.

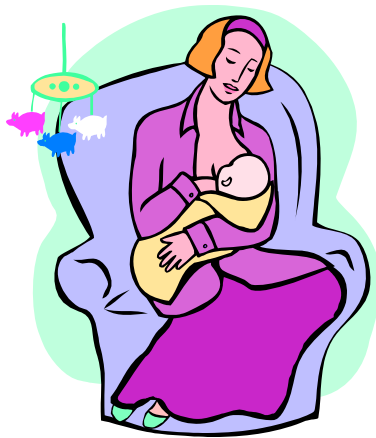


Tip #8: How to Manage Heartburn

Heartburn is a painful, burning feeling in the chest and sometimes the throat. It happens after eating. Heartburn is a common problem, occurring in many pregnancies. It can happen at any time, but it is most severe during the last 3 months.

What you can do to manage heartburn:

- ◆ Don't lie down or bend over after eating.
- ◆ Don't eat 2-3 hours before bedtime.
- ◆ Eat small meals frequently throughout the day.
- ◆ Limit high-fat foods, and avoid or limit foods that may trigger heartburn such as spicy foods.
- ◆ Don't smoke or drink alcohol.
- ◆ Raise the head of your bed by 6 inches with wooden blocks, or with a foam rubber wedge under the mattress.
- ◆ Wear loose-fitting, comfortable clothing.



Tip #9: How to Manage Constipation

Constipation is when you have 2 or less bowel movements per week, or when stools are hard and difficult to pass. Constipation is a common problem in pregnancy.

What you can do for constipation:

- ◆ Drink 8 to 12 cups of water per day. Hot or iced drinks in the morning are especially helpful.
- ◆ Eat regular meals, especially breakfast, every day.
- ◆ Get a lot of dietary fiber (25-35 grams) per day. High fiber foods include bran, bran cereals (WIC cereals), prunes and other dried fruits, vegetables, whole grains (e.g., whole wheat bread, oatmeal, brown rice)
- ◆ Do some physical activity (e.g., walk or swim)
- ◆ Natural fiber supplements such as Metamucil® are safe to take in pregnancy. Stool softeners can also be safely used.
- ◆ Do not take stimulant laxatives regularly. Do not take mineral oil.



CHARLES B. WANG COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

王嘉廉社區醫療中心

Website / 網址: www.cbwchc.org

**268 Canal Street,
New York, NY 10013**

**136-26 37th Avenue, 2 & 4/F
Flushing, NY 11354**

**125 Walker Street, 2/F
New York, NY 10013**

Internal Medicine / 內科部
(212) 379-6998
Women's Health / 婦女健康部
(212) 966-0228

Internal Medicine / 內科部
OB/GYN / 婦產科部
(718) 886-1200
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(212) 226-3888
Dental / 牙科部
(212) 226-9339

Health Education Department / 健康教育部 (212) 966-0461

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