

Pregnancy Diet & Weight

The best amount of weight to gain depends on how much you weighed right before you became pregnant. The doctor or staff will let you know if this weight is considered overweight, normal or underweight. If you are overweight the best amount to gain is fifteen or so pounds. If you are normal the best amount to gain is between twenty-five and thirty-five pounds. If you were underweight the best amount to gain is between twenty-eight and forty pounds (depending on pre-pregnancy weight). Important: do not try to lose weight while you're pregnant.

Unhealthy Weight during Pregnancy

If you do not gain enough weight, there is a slightly higher chance of your baby being smaller than normal. This might lead to early delivery. Small babies, whether born premature or at the due date, can still have serious problems after birth. To help lower the chances of having a small baby, try to gain the amount of weight recommended by your doctor or nurse. With excessive weight gain, the extra pounds will put more strain on your back and legs. Being overweight can lead to serious medical problems for you such as high blood pressure and diabetes. The extra weight may stay with you after you deliver your baby. Breast feeding may help you lose the extra pounds, but this is not true for everyone. However, even if you are overweight, do not try to lose weight while you are pregnant.

Healthy Pregnancy Diet

Your body needs a good balance of foods to keep you healthy and build a healthy baby. Try to eat regularly and not skip meals.

Important parts of your daily diet should include :

- Protein at each meal from meat, chicken, fish, eggs, beans, milk, or cheese.
- Calcium, Vitamins A and D from a few glasses of milk each day (low fat is best).
- B Vitamins from whole wheat cereals, breads or noodles.
- Vitamin C from the fruit or juice of oranges or grapefruits.

Other healthy additions to your diet are fresh fruits and vegetables. To keep from becoming constipated, increase high fiber foods like bran, bran cereals, breads, as well as fresh fruits and vegetables including salads. Butter, margarine or vegetable oils should only be used in moderation (these are empty calories). It is best to avoid "junk food" (candy, sodas, desserts) as they are very high in calories, have few nutrients or vitamins, and often contain artificial ingredients.

Supplements

If you eat a balanced diet, the only extra things you may need are some iron and multi-vitamins with folic acid. Later in your pregnancy we may suggest you take an iron pill up to three times each day. Taking additional vitamins and supplements available over the counter may be harmful to your developing baby. Please check with us before taking other vitamins or medications.

