

Prenatal Nutrition

How much weight should I gain?

Weight Gain Recommendations: in general, it is advisable to gain between 25-35 lbs during pregnancy if you begin pregnancy at a normal weight. However, if you are over- or underweight, the recommendations change as follows:

BMI Category	Recommended Total Weight Gain	Weight Gain per week in the 2nd and 3rd Trimester
Underweight (BMI <18.5)	28-40 lbs	1 lb/week
Normal Weight (BMI 18.5 - 24.9)	25-35 lbs	1 lb/week
Overweight (BMI 25 - 29.9)	15-25 lbs	0.6 lbs/week
Obese (BMI >30)	11-20 lbs	0.5 lbs/week

To meet the increasing nutrition requirements in pregnancy, it is recommended to increase your caloric intake by 100-300 calories per day.

Iron supplementation

A well-balanced diet may provide all the iron you need for the growing demands of pregnancy. Iron-rich foods include liver, red meats, eggs, dried beans, leafy green vegetables, whole-grain enriched bread and cereal, and dried fruits. However, many women require iron supplementation as well. In that case, we recommend 30 mg of ferrous iron supplements daily taken with Vitamin C for better absorption.

Can I eat fish?

YES! Fish are an excellent source of protein and Omega-3 fatty acids!

However, it is best to avoid the following fish: shark, swordfish, king mackerel, and tilefish.

TUNA can be consumed in limited amounts: 12 ounces (two servings) of canned tuna per week and no more than 6 ounces per week of albacore ("white") tuna. Raw fish should be avoided due to infection risks (see below).

Are there other foods I should avoid? How else can I decrease my infection risks?

Pregnant women do have an increased risk of food-related infections. Therefore, we recommend washing fruits and vegetables before consuming, only eat cooked meats, and consume only packaged, refrigerated cold cuts and only pasteurized soft cheeses and other dairy products. All surfaces that have come into contact with raw meat should be washed with hot soapy water. Following these guidelines can reduce your risk of contracting *Listeria*, *Toxoplasmosis*, *Salmonella*, and *Campylobacter*.

Toxoplasmosis is another infection you can avoid by following the above practices and avoiding cleaning the litter box, as cats are the main hosts for *toxoplasmosis*. If you must change the cat litter, wear gloves and a mask covering your nose and mouth. Additionally, because pregnant women are at an increased risk of hospitalization, intubation, or intensive care as complications from the flu virus, we recommend the influenza vaccine.

Can I exercise in pregnancy?

YES, unless you have any of the following conditions:

- Incompetent cervix or cerclage
- Persistent 2nd or 3rd trimester bleeding
- Placenta previa later than 26 weeks
- History of preterm labor or multiple gestation at increased risk of preterm labor
- Premature rupture of membranes (“breaking your water” early)
- Preeclampsia or hypertensive diseases of pregnancy
- Serious heart or lung disease, heavy smoking, or poorly controlled high blood pressure
- Severe anemia
- Poorly controlled Type I Diabetes
- Extremely over or underweight

Water Intake

We recommended 64-80 ounces of water daily. Other fluids can count towards this total, however remember that it’s the water your body needs, not the additional sugar, chemicals, or artificial sweeteners that are found in sodas, juices, and other beverages. Be mindful of this when choosing your fluids.

What about coffee?

Moderate intake of coffee - about 200 mg daily - has not been shown to pose an increased risk to the pregnancy. That is the amount of caffeine in one cup of coffee. We do not recommend more than this amount daily.

Are there other lifestyle recommendations?

We advise abstinence from smoking, alcohol, and all illicit drugs during pregnancy as smoking and alcohol cause known complications, and most illicit drugs either cause known complications or have not been sufficiently studied in pregnancy.