

Pregnancy Diet Myths and Facts

HEALTHY EATING DURING PREGNANCY

I'M "EATING FOR TWO," RIGHT?

- Yes and no. It's more important to "think for two" than to "eat for two." A healthy pregnancy depends on a healthy lifestyle. This includes a balanced diet, good rest, and daily exercise.
- Most women need to add only about **200 - 300** extra calories per day to their typical diet during the second and third trimesters. Examples of 300 calories:
 - 1 whole banana with 2 tablespoons of peanut butter.
 - ½ sandwich with 1 ounce of meat, 1 slice of cheese, lettuce, tomato, 1 teaspoon mayo, and a few avocado slices.
 - 6 ounces of plain 2% Greek yogurt with ¼ cup of granola.
 - ¼ cup of nuts with a large apple or pear.
 - 1 slice of pizza.
- If you're starting out your pregnancy above your ideal weight, talk to your doctor about your weight gain goals. Chances are you don't need to add more calories – your baby can actually borrow from your extra stores to meet his or her growth and development needs. Many moms like the way this leans out their figure.
- If you are underweight, it's important to increase your calories even more. Underweight and normal weight women who gain too little weight have an increased risk for a preterm or low-birth-weight baby.



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HOW MUCH WEIGHT SHOULD I GAIN DURING PREGNANCY?

- This depends on your body mass index (BMI) at the time of conception. Some weight gain – but not too much – is important. More than half of pregnant women gain too much weight during pregnancy.
- You can find an online BMI calculator at kp.org/calculators.

Pre-pregnancy BMI	Total pregnancy weight gain (pounds)	Total first trimester weight gain (pounds)	Second and third trimester weight gain (pounds)
Less than 18.5 (underweight)	28 – 40	2.2 – 6.6	5 per month
18.5 – 24.9 (normal weight)	25 – 35	2.2 – 6.6	4 per month
25 – 29.9 (overweight)	15 – 25	2.2 – 6.6	2.6 per month
More than 30 (obese)	11 – 20	0.5 – 4.4	2 per month

IT DOESN'T MATTER IF I GAIN TOO MUCH WEIGHT; I'LL JUST LOSE IT AFTER THE BABY COMES.

- Gaining too much weight during pregnancy may harm your health and the health of your baby. Gaining too much weight increases the risks for a C-section, early delivery, or a bigger baby, which can make for a complicated birth.
- Gaining too much weight during pregnancy can also affect your children for generations – increasing their risk for diabetes, high blood pressure, and overweight/obesity.
- Losing pregnancy weight can be difficult. About half of all women retain about 10 pounds of their pregnancy weight gain, and 1 out of every 4 women retain more than 20 pounds.

HOW CAN I HELP PREVENT TOO MUCH WEIGHT GAIN WHEN I'M SO HUNGRY?

- Try eating a meal or snack every 3 to 4 hours.
- Make meals and snacks more filling by including a combination of foods that contain protein, fiber, and fat each time that you eat. Some examples:
 - Fruit with nuts or seeds (apple slices with peanut butter).
 - Yogurt, fruit, nuts (plain Greek yogurt, blueberries, and almonds).
 - Whole-grain bread, lean protein, and fat (turkey on whole-wheat bread with avocado).
 - Whole grains, protein, fruit, and nuts (oatmeal, milk, peaches, and pecans).
 - Whole grain, lean protein, and vegetables (brown rice, chicken, and vegetable stir-fry).
 - Veggies with lean protein (carrots and hummus, or a salad with beans and dressing).
 - Lean protein with whole grain (string cheese with whole-grain crackers).
- Choose whole foods as often as you're able. Limit foods that are high in added sugars or white flours (and other processed grains) – they don't provide many nutrients or keep you feeling full for very long.
- Choose fruit as a sweet treat.



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WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

- Have a plan for daily physical activity.
- Try using a calorie and activity tracking system online or on your mobile phone. "Super Tracker" on **ChooseMyPlate.gov** can be a great place to start.
- Talk with a Kaiser Permanente health coach. It's a free service. Call 503-286-6816 or 1-866-301-3866 (toll free), option 2.
- Plan to breastfeed your baby. Women who breastfeed exclusively for three months tend to lose more weight than those who do not. Also, teens and adults who were breastfed as babies are 15 to 30 percent less likely to be obese.