

Tips to Manage Weight Gain

HEALTHY EATING DURING PREGNANCY

Are the numbers on the scale going up faster than you had planned? Taking these steps can slow the rate of weight gain for the rest of your pregnancy.

QUICK TIPS

- **Eat meals and snacks at regular intervals throughout the day.**
- **Aim for a balanced, healthy plate:**
 - Include vegetables with most meals – and snacks.
 - Choose whole fruit as your sweet treat, and limit foods with added sugar.
 - Be mindful of your portions. The suggested serving size on the label can be a great place to start.
 - 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).

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- **Have healthy snacks on hand** or packed to take to work, appointments, or while running errands. Try using fruit, vegetables, yogurt, cottage cheese, nuts, seeds, soy nuts, string cheese, or whole-grain crackers.
- **Stay hydrated.** Aim for 64 ounces of water per day.
- **Watch your intake of liquid calories** (juice, soda, sports drinks, sweetened coffee drinks, and flavored water).
- **Limit processed foods, fast foods, and convenience foods.** These contain few vegetables and are often full of salt, refined grains, added sugars, and unhealthy fats.
- **Add veggies at every opportunity.** Are you using a packaged meal like Hamburger Helper, Top Ramen, or Rice-A-Roni? Or having a pizza, casserole, or frozen meal for dinner? Add some fresh vegetables, like carrot sticks, sliced bell peppers, or a mixed green salad on the side. Or stir in some extra vegetables – such as sautéed onions, carrots, and celery, or chopped broccoli or spinach – while you are cooking the meal.
- **Eating out tips:** eat half and take half home or share a meal with a friend, and try to get a vegetable on your plate.

NON-FOOD IDEAS

- **Plan ahead.** Know what meals and snacks you and your growing family want to eat in the coming week. Then, make a shopping list and have these foods on hand. This will help you avoid excess calories from restaurant meals, and provide more nutrition for you and your family.
- **Move more.** Exercise daily or most days of the week. The benefits are endless.
- **Consider tracking your food intake and exercise.** Check the Internet or your smartphone apps. “Super Tracker” on [ChooseMyPlate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov) can be great places to start. Less technologically savvy? Try the simple act of writing down what and how much you eat. This can help you increase awareness and identify what can be improved.
- **Practice mindful eating.** Choose food that is both satisfying and nourishing, sit down at the table in a relaxed environment, and tune into your hunger and fullness cues.