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How Much Weight Should I Gain During Pregnancy

There are many things you can do to prepare for the delivery of a healthy baby. One of the most important things is eating right to gain the extra weight you'll need to support another life. Your doctor will keep a close eye on your weight gain during your pregnancy to make sure it's in the right range.

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What's the right amount?

Every pregnancy is different, but women generally gain around 11-16kg made up of baby weight and of fat reserves to feed your baby in your uterus and for breastfeeding. If you are overweight or underweight, your doctor may adjust this.

Stick within the recommended guidelines.

Try for a slow and steady pregnancy weight gain, but remember that all women gain weight at different rates. It's important to follow your doctor's recommendation because gaining either too little or too much pregnancy weight may lead to difficulties. It's also important to remember that it's the quality of the foods you eat as well as the quantity that matters.

Healthy weight: Good for you and baby

- Just right. When you gain weight appropriately, it is one less thing that could cause complications. Your healthcare professional will estimate the right amount of weight for you to gain based on your health and pre-pregnancy weight.
- Too little. Your growing baby needs nourishment, and you must eat enough for both of you. If you don't gain enough weight, you may deprive your baby of nutrients needed for growth. So be sure to follow your doctor's weight gain guidelines.
- Too much. Some women have been known to use pregnancy weight gain as an excuse to break all their healthy eating rules. That's not a good idea as it puts extra stress on your heart and joints, increases your risk of backache and other health problems – plus you'll find it harder to get back in shape when your baby arrives.

Can't keep much down?

In the first three months, you may lose a little weight because of vomiting and nausea that comes from morning sickness. Don't worry – your baby's nutrient needs will still be met by your body even if you have trouble keeping food down. If you have concerns about your weight during the period of morning sickness always discuss this with your doctor as there may be solutions you had not thought of.

Tips

- Before you get pregnant, consult a dietitian to check if you are at the right weight. Being a healthy weight before you conceive is best for you and your future baby.
- Dieting while pregnant is not advisable: you run the risk of drastically cutting down on you and your baby's essential nutrients and could effect your baby's development. Consult a dietitian if you want

guidance on your diet during pregnancy.

- Maintain a healthy balanced diet, rich in protein. Proteins are the building blocks of our bodies so when you're making a whole other little body inside you, it becomes quite an important nutrient in your diet.
- Make sure your diet is rich in foods containing folic acid, iron and calcium. Or supplements if your dietitian or doctor has recommended them. Folic acid plays an important role in neural tube development, while iron and calcium are important for blood cells and bone development for you and your baby.
- If you want to change your diet or workout routine, consult your doctor first. A moderate exercise routine spread out across the week may be very beneficial to help maintain strength and stamina throughout your pregnancy and childbirth.
- Take pride in your pregnancy weight increase because it means a healthy growing baby, if you have any concern you are gaining too much or too little weight talk to your doctor or a dietitian.

Risks

Complications for overweight mothers

If you are overweight during your pregnancy, you need to be a little cautious. If your body mass index (BMI) is too high you may increase your risk of complications, you should discuss this with your doctor. Excess weight can make your recovery longer also and affect your energy levels which you need when you have a newborn.

Complications for their babies

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