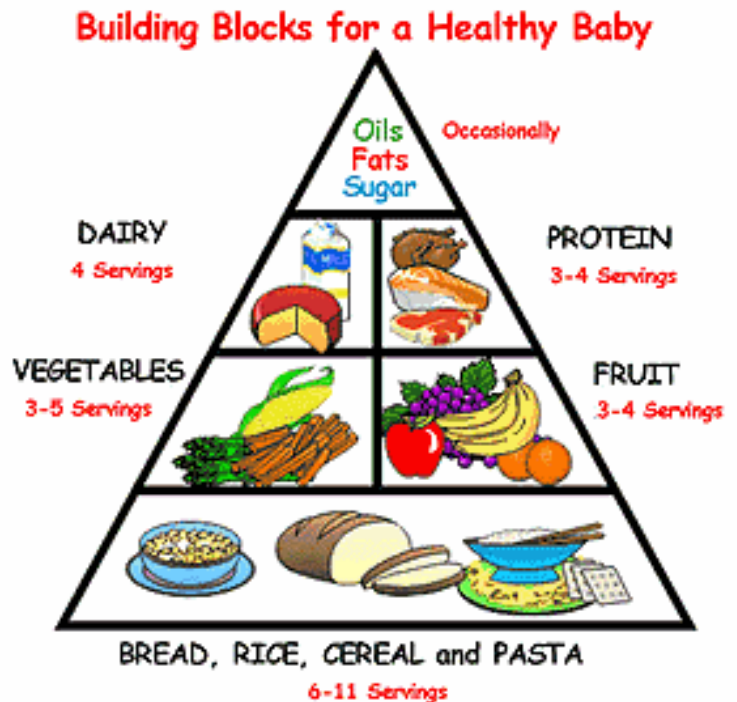


Healthy Eating for Pregnancy

Does the food I eat during pregnancy affect my baby?

Many women believe that they are eating for two when they get pregnant. It is not true that you need to eat enough for two people. Eating an excessive amount of calories will cause you to gain far more weight than is needed during pregnancy and may cause your baby to be obese as well. Babies who become obese prenatally may struggle with obesity all their lives.

But, it is true that you are eating for two in the sense that what you eat will have a great impact on your baby's health at birth and in the years to come. Research studies have proven that eating a high fat, high carbohydrate diet during pregnancy can increase the risk that your child will be overweight and may develop diabetes in later life. Eating a healthy diet during pregnancy is the best way to start being a good mother from the moment of conception.



What foods are important in the first trimester (first 12 weeks)?

In the first trimester, the baby is very small and it is more a matter of eating healthy diet than eating more.

In the first weeks of pregnancy, folic acid is important for development of your baby's brain and spine. Be sure to take your prenatal vitamin daily, as this has the recommended amount of folic acid included.

Calcium is important for development of baby's bones. Recommended sources of Calcium include skim milk, low fat cheese, lowfat yogurt, pudding, salmon, kale, and beans. If your diet is low in dairy foods or you are lactose intolerant, ask your provider for a calcium supplement.

Nerve and brain function in both mom and baby are aided by Vitamin B12. If you are a vegetarian or have had a gastric bypass, you may need a Vitamin B12 supplement. B12 can be found in fortified soy milk and other soy products .

Meat, eggs, milk, beans, seeds, nuts and whole grain cereals provide protein. During pregnancy, you should have 10 grams extra protein per day.

How should I eat in the second trimester (13-27 weeks)?

By the second trimester, your baby is getting larger and your calorie intake should begin to increase. At this time, you should be eating about 300 calories more than your usual diet. The extra calories should be healthy protein snacks between meals, including whole grains such as a slice of whole grain bread or a quarter cup of granola, lowfat milk products such as yogurt, string cheese or skim milk, or ten almonds.

You may notice changes in your digestion such as feeling bloated and full and having more gas. It will help to eat frequent small meals, eat more slowly, chew well and drink a lot of water between meals.



What happens in the third trimester?

As your baby grows, there is less and less room for your stomach and intestines. Many women feel uncomfortable after a big meal and note that they feel full after eating only a little. You will feel better eating small amounts of healthy foods throughout the day.

How important is fluid intake?

What you drink is almost as important as what you eat. Limit your juice intake to one small glass a day. While many women feel juice is the healthiest drink for their pregnancy, in fact it is very high in fruit sugar and cause unnecessary weight gain. Avoid sodas, caffeine drinks and alcohol.

Water is the most critical liquid during your pregnancy. Your body provides you with an easy way to know if you are drinking enough. Your first morning urine should be yellow as you have not been drinking all night. After your prenatal vitamin, your urine may be bright yellow. The rest of the day, your urine should be so pale it is barely visible in the toilet. If you are seeing a lot of yellow, your are not hydrating well. How much water you need each day will vary with your activity level and the outside temperature and humidity. Becoming dehydrated is one of the biggest risk factors for preterm labor.

What foods should I avoid in pregnancy?

- **Herbal Teas** should be used with caution as the safety and composition of the tea may not be known. Some teas may have medicinal effects which are not safe for your baby. Be sure all teas you drink are in filtered tea bags.
- **Soft Cheese** like feta, Brie, goat cheese, Camembert, blue cheese and Mexican queso fresco, panela or blanco may be made with unpasteurized milk and could contain listeria, a bacteria that can cause severe illness or miscarriage. Be sure

the word "pasteurized" is on the label of every product you buy. Pasteurized feta and goat's milk cheese, mozzarella, cheddar, cream cheese, cottage cheese and Laughing Cow cheese are safe bets.

- **Cold cuts and deli meat, whole cooked rotisserie chickens and turkey breasts or chickens and turkeys that have been prestuffed** and that are being stored in a refrigerated case can contain listeria. Chicken and turkey recently cooked and still under the warmer should be safe. Any of these meats can be eaten if you heat them until steaming first.
- **High mercury fish** such as shark, swordfish, tilefish, king mackerel, orange roughy, grouper, tuna steaks, saltwater bass, and canned solid white albacore tuna can be harmful to baby's brain development. You can safely eat up to 12 ounces of "safe fish" which include salmon, shrimp, haddock, cod, catfish, flounder, sole, tilapia, canned light tuna, scallops, pollack, herring, anchovies and caviar.
- **Sushi and sashimi** can contain bacteria and parasites as well as high levels of mercury. California rolls or rolls made with fully cooked fish, eel or crab or anything cooked tempura style are safe, as well as veggie rolls.
- **Refrigerated smoked seafood** such as smoked salmon is only safe if heated to steaming.
- **Raw or runny eggs** may carry salmonella and other foodborne illnesses. Avoid Caesar salad dressing made with raw eggs and raw cookie dough. Well cooked eggs are safe and a great source of protein and choline, which aid in your baby's development and help prevent certain birth defects.
- **Raw unwashed fruits and vegetables** can be sources of E. Coli and salmonella, which can cause severe infections and lead to miscarriage. Be sure to thoroughly wash all produce in warm, soapy water.
- **Saccharine**, an artificial sweetener found in Sweet N' Low can cross the placenta. Better alternatives are sweeteners made with aspartame and sucralose such as Equal, NutraSweet, NutraTaste and Splenda. Although these sweeteners are "safe", avoid excessive use.
- **Spicy foods** while not dangerous may cause major heartburn, which many women struggle with in pregnancy even with a bland diet. If you have been diagnosed with GERD (reflux) prior to your pregnancy, you are even more likely to have problems with spicy foods.
- **Caffeine**, found in coffee, brown sodas, Mountain Dew, and black teas, passes through the placenta to your baby. Caffeine causes babies to have racing heartbeats and affects how they absorb nutrients from your body. Drinking large amounts of coffee can increase your risk of miscarriage. If you are a heavy coffee drinker, cut back gradually to avoid withdrawal headaches. Try drinking decaf coffee and soda. Exercising while cutting back on coffee will decrease withdrawal symptoms.
- **Alcohol** in large amounts can cause severe birth defects and mental retardation. Because it is not known how small amounts of alcohol affect the unborn child, it is best to avoid altogether.
- **Large quantities of Vitamin A** can cause birth defects. Vitamin A is found in both beef and chicken liver in excessive amounts. Avoid both these foods during pregnancy.



What can I eat that is good for me and my baby?

There are many nutrients that are beneficial to your pregnancy:

- **Magnesium**, found in dark green leafy vegetables, bananas, dried apricots, avocados, almonds, cashews, peas, beans, seeds, soy and whole grains
- **Zinc**, found in crab, oysters, beef, pork, beans, cashews, yogurt and cheese
- **Folic acid**, found in your prenatal vitamins as well as in asparagus, dried beans, spinach, strawberries, oranges, avocado, broccoli, brussel sprouts, corn, tofu, peanuts, peanut butter, fortified bread and cereal, corn, cantaloupe, squash and beets.
- **Omega 3 fatty acids**, found in salmon, flax seeds and walnuts

Remember, your diet provides the building blocks for your baby to build bones and brain and muscle and lays a foundation for good health for the rest of your child's life. Eating a healthy diet during pregnancy is not easy but it is the first step in doing your best for your baby.