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TOP 5 TIPS FOR GOOD NUTRITION DURING PREGNANCY

"Many women need to increase their intake of specific nutrients before, during & after pregnancy" - 2009, Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health



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TIP 1

HOW MUCH WEIGHT SHOULD YOU GAIN DURING PREGNANCY?

A stable weight gain throughout pregnancy is important for your health and the health of your baby.

The risks of excessive weight gain include; gestational diabetes, high blood pressure, caesarean sections - premature birth, birth defects and difficulty losing weight after your baby is born.

The risks of inadequate weight gain during pregnancy include; low birth weight, childhood obesity and infant mortality.

How much weight should you gain during pregnancy?

This depends on your pre-conception BMI. No more than 2kg weight gain during first trimester is recommended for someone within the healthy weight range (more for women who are underweight – consult with your GP or Dietitian)

BMI Category	Pregnancy weight gain goal (kg)	Rate of weight gain per week in 2 nd & 3 rd trimester – (grams)
<18.5 (underweight)	12.5-18	500-600
18.5 – 24.9 (healthy)	11.5-16	500
25-29.9 (overweight)	7-11	300-400
30 – 34.9 (obese 1)	5-9	200-300
35-40 (obese 11)	0-9	0-300
>40 (obese 111)	0-6	0-200

TIP 2

ADD EXTRA FIBRE TO YOUR DIET

Constipation is common during pregnancy due to hormonal changes slowing down bowel motions and pressure from your growing baby. Include extra fibre from fruit, vegetables, high fibre cereals, wholegrain bread, nuts, seeds and legumes.

Drinking plenty of water daily and regular physical activity will also help avoid constipation. If you're not someone who engages in regular physical activity then this is something you should introduce slowly during you pregnancy, consider speaking to an Exercise Physiologist or Physiotherapist.

TIP 3

SUPPLEMENTATION

Below are a list of nutrients that are important during pregnancy and their dietary sources. Dietary sources alone may not be sufficient to meet these requirements; your GP/dietitian may suggest a pregnancy supplement that is suitable. Please also note that herbal/natural supplements may have drug like effects and these supplements should be used with caution. Remember that more does not always mean better, excessive supplementation can affect the health of your baby and you. Therefore, it is important to discuss with your GP and Dietitian re. supplementation.

Iodine

Requirements during pregnancy: 250-300ug/day

Deficiency: associated with stunted physical and mental growth

Dietary sources: freshly cooked & consumed seafood, bread with iodine, eggs & dairy.

Iron

Requirements during pregnancy: 27mg/day

Deficiency: increased risks of preterm labour, low birth weight, and increased foetal & maternal mortality.

Dietary sources: lean meats (red meat), some vegetables – green leafy ones, legumes & cereals fortified with iron. Iron from animal food sources is absorbed more readily than iron from plant-based foods.

Folate

Requirements during pregnancy: 600ug/day

Deficiency: associated with neural tube defects.

Dietary sources: green leafy vegetables (broccoli, spinach, bok choy and salad greens), fruit, cereals & bread fortified with folic acid

Vitamin D

Requirements during pregnancy: 400-600 IU/day

Deficiency: increased risk of preeclampsia, gestational diabetes and low birth weight. Mother's with vitamin D deficiency late in their pregnancy had children with reduced bone size & bone-mineral content. Vitamin D helps our bodies absorb and use calcium for supporting growth and maintenance of our skeleton and it helps regulate calcium levels in our blood.

Dietary sources: Vitamin D is not found naturally in many foods we consume. The main source of vitamin D is from exposure to sunlight. Some dietary sources of vitamin D include oily fish like salmon, tuna, mackerel & herring, egg yolks & some fortified products.

TIP 4

MERCURY TOXICITY - HOW MUCH FISH SHOULD YOU EAT DURING PREGNANCY?

Many pregnant mothers avoid fish during pregnancy due to fear of mercury toxicity. Some fish may accumulate mercury, which can be harmful to your baby's developing nervous system. However some cooked fish is safe to consume and an important part of healthy eating during pregnancy. Fish are high in omega 3 fats, which are essential for the growth of your baby's brain and eye development. Food Standards Australia New Zealand has set the following safe guidelines for fish intake:

FISH SERVES PER WEEK

1 serve = 150grams
1 serve per fortnight of shark (flake) OR billfish (swordfish/broadbill and marlin) and NO other fish that fortnight
OR
1 serve per week of Orange Roughy (Deep Sea Perch) or catfish and NO other fish that week
OR
2-3 serves per week of any other fish and seafood not listed above (e.g. 4-5 small 90 tins of salmon/tuna per week, snapper, trout, bass, cod)

TIP 5

FOOD SAFETY - LISTERIA

During pregnancy, changes to your hormones can compromise your immune system, making it difficult to fight off infections. Therefore protecting yourself from food poisoning is important. Listeria is a bacteria found in some foods, causing an infection called listeriosis. If this is passed to your unborn baby it can cause premature birth or miscarriage.

During pregnancy it is important to avoid foods that are a high risk of containing listeria.

- Unpasteurised dairy products
- Soft cheeses such as brie, camembert, ricotta, and fresh feta, unless they are cooked (yellow, hard cheese, and processed packaged cheese are safe)
- Soft serve ice cream and thick shakes
- All paté and ready to eat cold meats, including deli and packaged meats (e.g. ham, salami, cooked chicken)
- Ready-to-eat salads (from salad bars, buffets, supermarkets)
- Raw or smoked seafood (including oysters, salmon, sashimi, sushi)

MATERNAL NUTRITION DURING PREGNANCY & IN THE PERI-CONCEPTION PERIOD PLAYS A KEY ROLE IN THE GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR BABY. POOR NUTRITIONAL STATUS DURING THIS PERIOD MAY INCREASE THE RISK OF PREGNANCY OUTCOMES. WE WOULD LOVE TO WORK WITH YOU TO ENSURE THAT YOU ARE GETTING THE RIGHT NUTRITION FOR YOU & YOUR GROWING BABY.



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