

NUTRITION

On Your
Own

Self-Paced Lesson



SP-000-38

Healthy Weight Gain During Pregnancy

Your baby depends on you to gain a healthy amount of weight during pregnancy. Gaining the right amount of weight will help your baby grow strong, help you have a better delivery, and help you get back to your usual weight easier.

How Much Weight Should I Gain?

The amount of weight gain during pregnancy is different for every woman. It usually depends on your weight before becoming pregnant. Your doctor is the best person to ask about how much weight is healthy for you to gain. Most women who have a normal weight before becoming pregnant can expect to gain between 25 and 35 pounds. Women who are underweight or pregnant with more than one baby may need to gain more, while those who are overweight may need to gain less. This chart shows recommended weight gain ranges for women who are pregnant with one baby.

Did You Know...

Pregnant women do not need to eat twice as much. Most women only need about 340-450 extra calories during the last six months of pregnancy. This is about one to two extra healthy snacks per day.

Pregnancy Weight Gain Ranges for Single Baby

Pre-pregnancy weight*	Total weight gain range
Underweight (BMI <18.5)	28-40 pounds
Normal weight (BMI 18.5-24.5)	25-35 pounds
Overweight (BMI 25.0-29.9)	15-25 pounds
Obese (BMI ≥30)	11-20 pounds

*Body Mass Index (BMI) is a ratio of your weight to height. Ask your doctor or WIC nutritionist if you are not sure what your BMI is or how much weight you should gain. Women who are carrying more than one baby may need to gain more weight.





Where Does The Weight Go?

In addition to your growing belly, you may have noticed the rest of your body changing. Weight gain during pregnancy is more than just the baby; you will have weight gain all over your body. This is normal and healthy. The picture below shows a woman who gained 30 pounds during pregnancy – you may gain more or less than this.

baby	7 ½ pounds
placenta	1 ½ pounds
uterus	2 pounds
amniotic fluid	2 pounds
breast tissue	2 pounds
blood	4 pounds
body fluids	4 pounds
maternal fat stores	7 pounds
total	30 pounds



Weight gain is slow at first – you may only gain 1 to 5 pounds in the first three months of pregnancy. Then you might start gaining more quickly, about ½ to 1 pound per week in the last six months of pregnancy until the baby comes.

Tips for Staying Healthy

- Eat a variety of healthy foods, like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, protein, and dairy. Eating well helps you stay healthy and feel your best, and provides your growing baby with the best nutrition.
- Stay active by doing low-impact activities like walking, swimming, light stretching, and playtime with your children. Check with your doctor on what kind of activity is safe for you and your baby.

Did You Know...

Exercise can boost your mood. Go for a walk – it'll help to set up a healthy habit not only for now, but also after your baby is born.

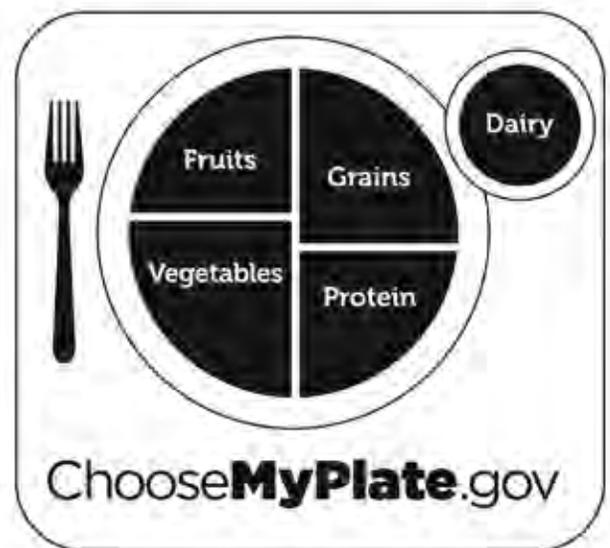


How to Create a Healthy Plate

- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables. Choose a variety of colors.
- Make one quarter of your plate grains, choosing whole grains most often. Examples of whole grains include brown rice, whole wheat bread, oatmeal, and whole wheat or corn tortillas.
- Make the last quarter of your plate a protein-rich food. When eating meats, choose low-fat or lean options like chicken, fish, and lean beef. Beans, peas, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds are also good sources of protein.
- Include 1% or fat-free dairy with your meals. Milk, yogurt, cheese and fortified soy milk have calcium, which is important for keeping your bones healthy.

Did You Know...

Your baby can taste some of the flavors of the foods you eat during pregnancy. That's one reason to eat smart during pregnancy.



Visit
www.choosemyplate.gov/pregnancy-breastfeeding.html
for more tips.

Sample Menu



Breakfast

Scrambled eggs, whole-wheat toast, yogurt, kiwi slices, and a glass of water



Snack

Peanut butter with celery



Lunch

Black Beans, brown rice, broccoli, mango, glass of 1% or fat-free milk



Snack

Cheese cubes with apple



Dinner

Fish fillet, peas and carrots, corn tortilla, cantaloupe, glass of water

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Check Your Knowledge

1. Name one reason why it is important for you to gain the right amount of weight during pregnancy.

2. **True or False?** Weight gain during pregnancy is more than just the baby; you will have weight gain all over your body. _____

3. Which of these can help you make a healthy plate? Check one.

- Eat more fried meats
- Fill half of your plate with fruits and vegetables
- Drink whole milk with meals
- Fill half of your plate with bread or white rice

4. What is one thing you are going to do to stay healthy during your pregnancy?

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