

EXPECTANT MOTHERS

THE IMPORTANCE OF HEALTHY NUTRITION CHOICES DURING PREGNANCY

1. Why is Nutrition Important?

Explaining why a nutritious diet during pregnancy and what this means for a mother and her baby

2. What is a Nutritious Diet?

An explanation of what a nutritious diet is. Including food choices and caloric intake

3. Steps Toward a Nutritious Diet

A list of the top 5 key steps to having a nutritious pregnancy.

4. Elements of a Nutritious Diet

Defining what is a nutritious diet, including what to include and avoid during pregnancy.

5. Building a Nutritious Diet Meal by Meal

Quick and easy meal and snack recommendations for a typical day of an expectant mother with recipes included.

6. Additional Resources

A list of websites and apps that address nutrition and birth defect information and what is available on each site/app. Hyperlinks and QR codes included.

IMPORTANCE OF NUTRITION

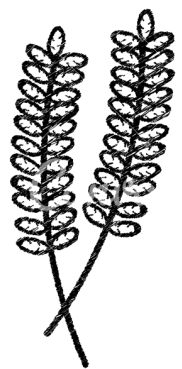
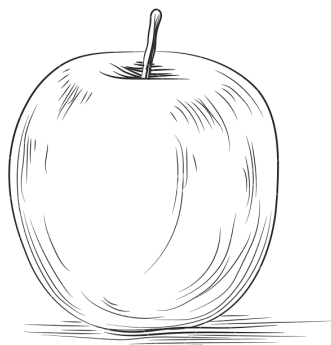
Nutrition is an important part of living a healthy lifestyle in all stages of life. Making smart choices help us manage a healthy weight and reduce the risk of developing a chronic disease.

Nutrition during pregnancy is also a vital element in determining the health and wellbeing of the mother and the baby both during and after pregnancy.

Eating the right food and ensuring that the mother is receiving adequate nutrition can help with the prevention of birth defects, birth complications, gestational diabetes, and high blood pressure.

WHAT IS A NUTRITIOUS DIET?

Optimal nutrition includes eating a balanced diet of **vegetables, protein, fruits, whole grains, & dairy.**



An expectant mother's caloric intake should increase with each trimester, typically by 300-400 calories. What this means is that if in the first trimester an expectant mother is consuming 1,500 calories a day, in the second trimester she should increase her caloric intake to 1,800-1,900 total calories per day. By the third trimester she should be consuming about 2,100-2,200 calories a day.

The mother should discuss this with their doctor for individual health needs. It is important that these calories come from nutritious sources that are providing vital nutrients.

STEPS TOWARDS NUTRITION

1 Do **research**. Find credible and reliable information on pregnancy, even if it is not the mother's first child. This will keep the mother informed and provide her with the most up-to-date medical guidance. Visit American Pregnancy Association and The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists for more information.

- <https://americanpregnancy.org/pregnancy-health/pregnancy-nutrition/>
- <https://www.acog.org/Patients/FAQs/Nutrition-During-Pregnancy?IsMobileSet=false>

3 Keep track of **weight gain**. Gaining the proper amount of weight is important for the growth and development of the baby. This also helps prevent future health complications during labor and delivery. There are different recommendations for women depending on BMI. You can track the weight at home or with a doctor. (APP): "Pregnancy App."

5 **Exercise**. Exercise is very beneficial during pregnancy. It is recommended to exercise about 30 minutes a day. This can be anything from a brisk walk outdoors to doing chores and walking around the home. Exercise can help boost the mother's mood and energy levels! This, along with nutrition, will help to prevent against the development of gestational diabetes.

Click Here!

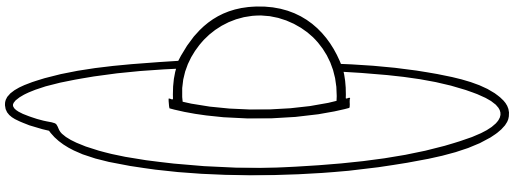
2 Take a **prenatal vitamin**. This will help alleviate some of the stress about receiving all of the proper nutrients needed during pregnancy. Because a large portion of the baby's vital development occurs within the first 2 months of pregnancy, it is recommended that the mother takes a women's multi vitamin before they get pregnant. Ask a pharmacist for recommendations on a multi and prenatal vitamin.

4 Drink **water**. During pregnancy it is important for the mother to increase water intake. The mother's blood volume increases by about 50% while they are pregnant in order to help the uterus and heart. It is the source of the transportation of nutrients and chemicals to and from the baby. It is recommended that the mother consumes about 8-12 glasses a day, which equates to about 2.3 liters.

WHAT TO CONSUME

1

FOLATE



Folate is an extremely important nutrient for expectant mothers. Folate is a form of a B vitamin that is responsible for preventing birth defects of the brain and spinal chord, or neural tube defects. It is recommended that an expectant mother consumes about 400 micrograms per day. Natural sources of folic acid are legumes, eggs, and leafy greens. Supplementation from a prenatal vitamin, in the form of methylfolate, is also a good source!

2

IRON

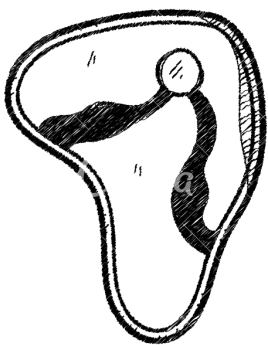


Adequate consumption of iron is important at all stages of life. A woman's recommended dose is doubled when she becomes pregnant. This is because iron is crucial for the food supply to the baby, as well as oxygen transportation. Natural sources of iron include: lean red meat, spinach, fortified breakfast cereals, and dark chocolate!

Helpful Tip: vitamin C aids in the absorption of iron!

3

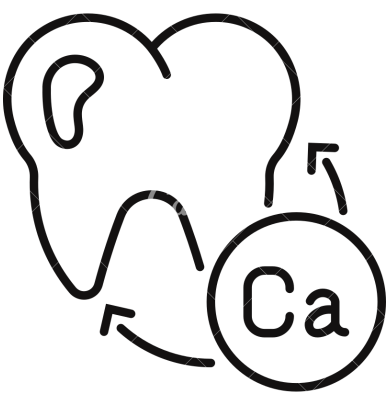
PROTEIN



A women's recommended consumption of protein should also be increased while pregnant. The recommendations is about 75-100 grams a day. It is important for the baby's overall growth and development. Natural sources of protein rich foods include: meat, eggs, poultry, nuts and seeds, as well as beans.

4

CALCIUM

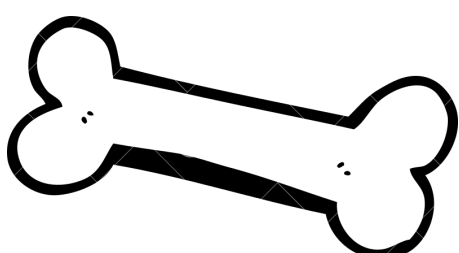


Calcium is needed for the healthy development of the baby's heart, bones, teeth, muscles and nerves. Natural sources of calcium include: milk, yogurt, cheese, fortified cereals, and juices.

Calcium can be taken from the mother's bones to supply the baby with the amount it needs for proper development if the mother is not meeting her recommended intake.

5

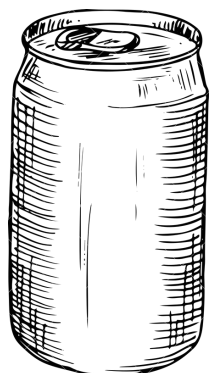
VITAMIN D



Vitamin D is also important for bone development. Vitamin D is needed in order for the body to properly absorb calcium and phosphorus to build strong bones. This is important for both the mother's bone health, as well as the baby's bone and structural development. Natural sources of vitamin D include: fatty fish like salmon and tuna, fortified milk and dairy products, and egg yolks!

It is important to know that vitamin D is a fat soluble vitamin. This means that it does not need to be supplemented everyday because it is stored in your body longer than a water soluble vitamin, such as vitamin C. Many women are deficient so levels should be tested and discussed with their doctor.

WHAT TO AVOID



1

LIMITING CAFFEINE

Limiting the consumption of caffeine is important in preventing complications of birth defects like low birth weight. It is recommended that a woman consumes no more than 200mg a day, which is about 2 cups of coffee and 32 ounces of soda.

A natural alternative for a good source of energy are bananas, apples, and sweet potatoes!

Here is a link to a helpful article that discusses caffeine intake and sources during pregnancy:

LINK: <https://www.thebump.com/a/caffeine-during-pregnancy>

2

LIMITING SEAFOOD

It is important for expectant mothers to receive essential fatty acids. Fish are a good source of these fatty acids, however, it is important to be aware of mercury consumption. Mercury is a toxic chemical that can be in seafood. It is harmful to the developing baby's nervous system. High levels of mercury are found in a variety of seafood and should be avoided. Fish with low mercury levels are shrimp, canned light tuna, and salmon. Keep an eye out for albacore, mackerel, and swordfish as they contain very high levels of mercury and should be avoided.

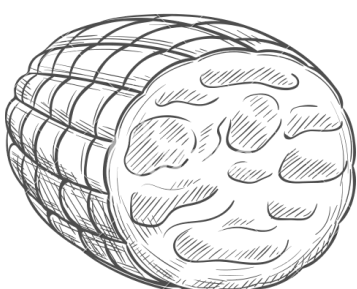
There can also be issues with raw fish and food borne illness. So, raw fish should be avoided entirely.



3

PROCESSED MEATS

Deli meats including hot dogs, cold cuts, luncheon meats, refrigerated pate and meat spreads should be avoided. These are all common sources of harmful bacteria that can cause sickness, so it is best that they are avoided.



4

AVOIDING ALCOHOL

Exposure to alcohol during pregnancy can have harmful effects on the developing baby. This is known as fetal alcohol syndrome. It mainly causes cognitive function problems and abnormal growth, particularly in the baby's facial structure. Alcohol passes easily through the placenta and to the baby, so it is safest to stray away from it completely.



5

AVOIDING SMOKING

Smoking can cause various health problems to a developing baby. It mainly effects the lungs and the brain. Expectant mothers who smoke are more likely to give birth early and deliver a baby that has a low birth weight.

It is important to also limit exposure to second hand smoke.



BUILDING A NUTRITIOUS DIET

MEAL BY MEAL IDEAS

BREAKFAST

Avocado toast: <https://feelgoodfoodie.net/recipe/avocado-toast-with-egg-3-ways/>

Oatmeal: <https://www.eatingbirdfood.com/healthy-oatmeal-recipe-roundup/>

Breakfast wrap: <https://www.cheatsheet.com/life/healthy-and-energizing-breakfast-wraps.html/>

Egg muffin bakes: <https://www.delish.com/cooking/recipe-ideas/a25563943/egg-muffins-recipe/>

LUNCH

Mexican bowl: <https://iowagirleats.com/easy-homemade-burrito-bowls/>

Chicken and caprese salad:

<https://www.averiecooks.com/balsamic-chicken-caprese-salad/>

Your favorite **soup and salad** combo

Thai lettuce wraps: <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/food-recipes/easy/a42833/thai-turkey-lettuce-wraps-recipe/>

DINNER

Loaded Sweet Potato

<https://www.loveandlemons.com/healthy-loaded-sweet-potatoes/>

Chicken or Fish Tacos

<https://www.skinnytaste.com/cilantro-lime-tilapia-tacos/>

Chicken and Veggie Stir Fry

<https://ifoodreal.com/healthy-chicken-stir-fry-recipe>

Stuffed Bell Peppers

<https://www.wellplated.com/italian-stuffed-peppers/>

SNACKS

Peanut or almond butter with apples

Hummus with carrots, broccoli, and celery

Nuts and seeds

Yogurt with granola, berries, and chia seeds

No bake protein balls

Recipe: <https://www.thehealthymaven.com/no-bake-oatmeal-protein-energy-balls/>

Hard boiled egg and banana peanut butter wrap

Variations in types of meals are important for being able to maintain healthy eating habits during pregnancy. Tracking your meals on an app, **such as MyFitnessPal**, can help see the micro and macronutrient breakdown! It can also help with keeping track of water intake and exercise.



Scan Here!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

WEBSITES

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF OBSTETRICIANS AND GYNECOLOGISTS

FAQ's

<https://www.acog.org/Patients/FAQs/Nutrition-During-Pregnancy?IsMobileSet=false>

This website has a list of frequently asked questions for expecting mothers regarding many aspects of health and wellness during pregnancy including how to plan a healthy diet and during pregnancy.

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

What are Birth Defects?

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/birthdefects/facts.html>

This website contains information about birth defects. It provides facts about common birth defects as well as their causes and how to prevent them.

AMERICAN PREGNANCY ASSOCIATION

Pregnancy Nutrition

<https://americanpregnancy.org/pregnancy-health/pregnancy-nutrition/>

This website provides knowledge on nutrition during pregnancy including the recommendation for adequate calorie intake and macro and micronutrient distribution. It offers options for foods high in specific nutrients that are vital for expecting mothers.

ACADEMY OF NUTRITION AND DIETETICS

Eating Right During Pregnancy

<https://www.eatright.org/health/pregnancy/what-to-eat-when-expecting/eating-right-during-pregnancy>

This is an article written by a registered dietician nutritionist about knowing what to eat during pregnancy at different stages. It focuses on the MyPlate recommendations, which provides and easy to understand breakdown of meals.

MAYO CLINIC

Healthy Lifestyle: Pregnancy Week by Week

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/pregnancy-nutrition/art-20045082>

This website explains which specific nutrients to focus on and charts out what foods are rich in each nutrient. These charts contain serving sizes as well as the nutritional content in each food.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

APPS

All of these apps are offered for free by the app store. They give the ability to visualize the baby's growth, track weight gain, and offer nutrition and fitness plans!



THE BUMP

This is the number one baby tracking app in the app store. It helps with planning each doctor visit, offers 3D visualization of the baby's growth, articles, and has a variety of recommended baby products for any expectant mother.



Baby2Body: Pregnancy Wellbeing

This app is centered around exercise and the mothers wellbeing during pregnancy. This app includes tailored pregnancy workouts, a water intake tracker, wellbeing podcasts, pelvic floor excercises, and healthy recipies,



Pregnancy+

This app has many beneficial features for any expectant mother. It has daily and weekly pregnancy information, a personal diary, weight and doctor visit logs, kick counter, contraction timer, and shopping lists.

REFERENCES

<https://www.parents.com/pregnancy/my-body/pregnancy-health/healthy-pregnancy-tips/>

<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/weight-management/health-tips-pregnant-women>

<https://www.verywellfamily.com/tips-for-a-healthy-pregnancy-2753102>

<https://www.acog.org/Patients/FAQs/Nutrition-During-Pregnancy?IsMobileSet=false>

<https://americanpregnancy.org/pregnancy-health/pregnancy-nutrition/>