

Nutrition in Pregnancy

A healthy and balanced diet is critical in pregnancy. Your growing child gets their nutrition directly from you, so pregnancy is a great time to make changes to your eating habits which will have lasting positive effects. Too much weight gain over the next nine months increases your risk of developing high blood pressure, diabetes of pregnancy and having a large baby (macrosomia). Insufficient weight gain often results in underweight babies who sometimes have a more difficult transition following delivery. There is a safe balance that can be achieved.

Here are some pointers to get you started on a healthy diet.

Your weight matters. Guidelines for weight gain in pregnancy have been established based on your pre-pregnancy BMI (weight in relation to height). Keeping these guidelines in mind and discussing them with your doctor is very important.

Recommended guidelines for weight gain (*Institute of Medicine, 2009*)

PRE-PREGNANCY BMI	SINGLE PREGNANCY	TWIN PREGNANCY
Underweight (<18.5)	28-40 lbs	no data available
Normal weight (19-25)	25-35 lbs	37-54 lbs
Overweight (25-30)	15-25 lbs	31-50 lbs
Obese (>30)	11-20 lbs	25-42 lbs

A daily prenatal vitamin that contains folic acid is important before, during and after your pregnancy. If you are planning to breastfeed, you should continue your prenatal vitamins until you stop nursing.

- Continued on back





UW Health Ob-Gyn Clinics

20 S. Park St. Clinic*
20 S. Park St., Suite 307
20 S. Park St., Suite 506
Madison, WI 53715
(608) 287-2830

Arboretum Ob-Gyn Resident
Physician Clinic
1102 S. Park St.
Madison, WI 53715
(608) 287-5898

Union Corners Clinic*
2402 Winnebago St.
Madison, WI 53704
(608) 242-6840

West Clinic*
451 Junction Rd.
Madison, WI 53717
(608) 265-7601

*Location includes
Midwifery Clinic

For a complete list of our
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please visit uwhealth.org.

Most foods are safe during pregnancy. If you have questions about a specific food, talk to your doctor. Here are some quick reminders:

Caffeine in pregnancy is OK in moderation. The maximum recommended daily intake is less than 200mg.

Caffeine quantities in some common beverages:

BEVERAGE	MILLIGRAMS
Grande Starbucks coffee	550
8oz brewed coffee	135
8oz Tea bag or leaf	35
12 oz Regular Soda	35-55
8.3 oz Red Bull	80

Any meat, fish or poultry you eat during pregnancy must be fully cooked. It is advisable to limit processed/deli meats especially if you are unable to store or refrigerate them appropriately.

If you are a vegetarian or vegan, inform your doctor and consider adding a multivitamin to your diet. It may be important to meet with a dietitian to ensure you are getting adequate amounts of folic acid, vitamin B12 and zinc.

Avoid eating shark, swordfish, king mackerel or tile fish, which contain high levels of mercury. Up to 12 ounces (2-3 servings of 4 oz each) a week of fish that are low in mercury such as shrimp, canned light tuna (not albacore), salmon, pollock and catfish is considered safe.

If you are carrying twins, the recommendations for weight gain in pregnancy are roughly double. Healthy choices are still important.

Herbal medicines should be avoided. The inactive ingredients in many over-the-counter products are not FDA regulated and could be harmful to your baby.

The appropriate level of Vitamin D in pregnancy is unknown and the ideal amount of supplementation is not universally agreed upon. Too much Vitamin D can be toxic. Vegetarians, patients with limited sun exposure, patients with dark skin complexions or patients with a known Vitamin D deficiency may benefit from supplementation.

Fish oils are safe to take during pregnancy.

Avoid alcohol and smoking during pregnancy.

Food cravings are common in pregnancy and are not harmful as long as you continue to eat a healthy diet. Cravings for starch, chalk or clay, known as Pica, can be harmful.