



HEALTHY PREGNANCY

A balanced diet is a basic part of good health at all times in your life. During pregnancy, your diet is even more important. The foods you eat are the main source of nutrients for your baby. If you have not been eating a healthy diet, pregnancy is a great time to change old habits and start healthy new ones. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has designed an online interactive diet-planning program called “My Pyramid Plan for Moms” specifically for people who are pregnant or breastfeeding (<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>). This program gives you a personalized plan that includes the kinds of foods in the amounts that you need to eat for each trimester of pregnancy.

How Much Weight Should You Gain During Pregnancy?

Your provider will calculate and tell you your **Body Mass Index (BMI)** number.

<i>Pregnancy Weight Status</i>	<i>Body Mass Index (BMI)*</i>	<i>Weight Gain (pounds)</i>
Underweight	Less than 18.5	28 – 40
Normal weight	18.5 -24.9	25 – 35
Overweight	25.0 -29.9	15 – 25
Obese	30	11 – 20
	40+	10

Overweight and obese women are at increased risk for several pregnancy problems. These problems include **gestational diabetes**, high blood pressure, **preeclampsia**, difficulty with pain relief during labor, and cesarean delivery. Babies of overweight and obese mothers also are at greater risk for certain problems, such as **birth defects**, **macrosomia (large baby)** with possible birth injury, and childhood obesity.

In addition to nutrition, exercise during pregnancy is also important. Becoming active and exercising at least 30 minutes on most, if not all days of the week, can benefit your health in the following ways:

- Help to reduce backaches, constipation, bloating, and swelling
- May help prevent gestational diabetes
- Increases your energy
- Improves your mood
- Improves your posture
- Promotes muscle tone, strength, and endurance
- Helps you sleep better

Walking is good exercise for anyone. Brisk walking gives a total body workout and is easy on the joints and muscles. If you were not active before getting pregnant, walking is a great way to start an exercise program.