



Weight Gain During Pregnancy

The amount of weight you gain during pregnancy is important for the health of your pregnancy and for the long-term health of you and your baby. There are possible risks associated with gaining too much or too little weight during your pregnancy.

Gaining less weight than the recommended amount of weight in pregnancy is associated with delivering a baby who is too small. Low birth weight babies may have difficulty breastfeeding, may be at an increased risk for illness, and may experience developmental delays (not meeting the milestones for his/her age). Gaining more than the recommended amount of weight in pregnancy can increase your risk of having a baby who is born too large, which can lead to delivery complications, gestational diabetes, preeclampsia cesarean delivery, and obesity during childhood.

Pregnancy Weight Gain Guidelines: How much weight you should gain during pregnancy is based on your body mass index (BMI) before pregnancy.

WEIGHT RANGE & BMI	RECOMMENDED WEIGHT GAIN
Underweight before pregnancy • BMI under 18.5	28-40 pounds
Normal weight before pregnancy • BMI between 18.5 - 24.9	25-35 pounds
Higher weight before pregnancy • BMI of 25-29 • BMI of 30 or higher	• 15-25 pounds • 11-20 pounds

These numbers are based on single pregnancies and differ if you are pregnant with multiples. Talking to your health care provider about your weight gain is important. Try not to worry if you're slightly above or below these weights; Remember these numbers are guidelines. You, your health care provider, and your Registered Dietitian can help determine what is best for you. On a trimester basis in a woman with an average prepregnancy weight, the rate of gain may look like this:

- **First trimester:** 1- 4.5 pounds
- **Second trimester:** 1-2 pounds per week
- **Third trimester:** 1-2 pounds per week

This is just an average. Your individual weight gain/rate of gain may vary. Always discuss this with your health care provider, since they monitor your baby's growth.

TIPS FOR HEALTHY WEIGHT GAIN

Know your caloric needs: Usually in the first trimester you will not need extra calories. You need approximately 340 extra calories/day in the second trimester, and about 450 extra calories per day in the third trimester. Talk to your Registered Dietitian for help determining your nutrition requirements! See examples below for ideas on how some foods can add up to these totals!

- **Example of extra calories:** 1 medium banana with 2 Tbsp peanut butter and 8 ounces of skim milk (378 calories)
- **Example of extra calories:** 1 slice whole wheat bread with ½ medium avocado (add pepper or other seasoning), 1 mozzarella cheese stick, 1 nonfat Greek yogurt (440 calories)

Eat a balanced diet: Focus on vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low fat dairy, lean protein and heart healthy fat sources. Try to limit too much added sugar and saturated fat.

Stay active: Physical activity is healthy, safe, and recommended for most pregnant women! Talk to your health care provider to determine if you have any physical activity restrictions. It is recommended to get at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic activity per week. This can be broken up into small sessions throughout the course of the day. For example: walking briskly for 15 minutes twice daily, five days/week would meet that goal!



The information contained here within is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition. Never disregard professional medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something you have read.

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References:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternalinfanthealth/pregnancy-weight-gain.htm>
- <https://americanpregnancy.org/pregnancy-health/pregnancy-weight-gain/>
- https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/lose_wt/BMI/bmicalc.htm

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