



Diet During Pregnancy

In this discussion of you will learn why you need a well-balanced diet while you are pregnant and what foods you should eat. You will also find out foods you should avoid and foods that will help some of the unpleasant side effects of pregnancy.

What foods do I need to eat?

Eating regular, well-balanced meals is more important when you are pregnant than at any other time of your life. What you eat provides food for your baby as well as yourself.

You will need more protein, vitamins, calcium, and iron. These nutrients are important for your baby's growth and development, and give your baby strong bones and teeth, healthy skin, and a healthy body.

Foods that are excellent sources of protein and vitamins are:

beans and peas	meat
nuts	fish
peanut butter	poultry
eggs	cheese, milk, yogurt

Good sources of calcium are:

cheese	sardines
milk	salmon
yogurt	greens

Foods rich in iron are:

Cereal	eggs
Rice	liver
dried fruit	kidneys
green	whole grain or enriched
vegetables	rice

You will require more food calories (an extra 200 to 300, beyond the 2100 calories needed daily by a non-pregnant woman). And, your doctor will suggest a range of weight that you should gain, usually 20 to 30 pounds.

How do I know if I am eating a balanced diet?

To make sure your diet is balanced, use the following chart as a guideline for choosing the types and amounts of foods you eat in a day?

Carbohydrates (grains, fruits, vegetables) should make calories and variety is important.
up at least half of your daily

Food Type	# of Servings	Example of Serving Size
Meat, Poultry, Fish, Beans, Eggs	2	2 oz lean meat
Grains	5 to 11	1 slice of bread 1/2 cup of pasta 1 ounce of cereal
Fruits	2 to 4	1 fruits
Vegetables	4	1/2 cup of vegetables
Milk, cheese, yogurt	2 to 3	1 cup of milk 1 cup of yogurt

Do I need a dietary supplement?

Many women require additional vitamins and minerals in their diet during pregnancy. The following are often recommended:

- A multivitamin tablet with 60mg of iron and 1mg of folic acid (usually called a prenatal vitamin); this may be the only vitamin the doctor suggest
- Iron: many women need an extra 30mg a day of iron in the last half of the pregnancy. Women carrying twins, women with low iron in their blood, and larger women may need up to 100mg a day of additional iron
- Calcium: additional calcium maybe needed in the last half of pregnancy when the baby needs calcium for bone development
- Folic Acid: levels of this vitamin seem to go down as pregnancy progresses, the usual dose needed to supplement a poor diet is 1mg a day