

Eating Healthy During Pregnancy

Eating healthy while you are pregnant is vital. When you eat healthy foods, you help your baby get a good start in life.

Why is eating healthy important?¹

Good nutrition during pregnancy helps your baby's bones, muscles and organs grow. It also helps your changing body stay strong. A healthy diet with plenty of vitamins and minerals will give you and your baby what you both need.

Women who have a healthy weight and a normal body mass index (BMI) may gain between 25 to 35 pounds while they are pregnant. To help you stay healthy while you're pregnant, you need to consume about 300 extra calories a day.

Here are tips for healthy eating while you are pregnant.^{2,3,4}

See your doctor as soon as you think you are pregnant. Follow these guidelines to help keep you and your growing baby healthy.

- Talk to your doctor about taking prenatal vitamins with folic acid.
- Eat foods with folic acid. This helps your baby's brain and spinal cord to form. You can get folic acid from:
 - Dark, green leafy veggies such as spinach, broccoli and asparagus.
 - Fruits such as bananas, oranges and pineapple.
 - Nuts such as walnuts, pecans and almonds.
 - Black beans, baked beans and peas.

- Eat 3 to 4 servings of meat, eggs or dried beans each day for protein.
- Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables every day.
- Eat 2 servings of low-mercury fish per week. (Consult with your doctor.)
- Don't eat raw fish, eggs, meat, chicken or shellfish. Make sure these foods are cooked well.
- Avoid shark, swordfish, king mackerel and tilefish.
- Eat 6 to 11 small servings of whole grains, such as multigrain bread and brown rice.
- Drink 4 to 6 glasses of milk and milk products per day.
- Drink 6 to 8 glasses of water per day.
- Avoid unpasteurized soft cheese products.
- Avoid alcohol as well as drinks with caffeine.
- Wash all fruit, vegetables and salad greens well.
- Check "sell by" and "best before" dates on all food and drinks.



We are here to help you.

Talk to your doctor or nurse about how to create a support team to help you during your pregnancy. We are here for you, too. We can sign you up for our **Healthy Habits Count for You and Your Baby Prenatal Program**. Just call our Customer Care Center number. We will send you a booklet that gives you information that will help you have a healthy baby.

The Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program can give you healthy foods if you qualify. Your doctor will help you sign up. To learn more, call WIC.

To learn even more about healthy eating, you could visit the food pyramid website at www.mypyramid.gov/mypyramidmoms/index.html.



BlueChoice HealthPlan Medicaid

Customer Care Center: **1-866-781-5094**

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www.bluechoicescmedicaid.com

WIC: **1-800-868-0404**

TTY lines are only for members with hearing and speech loss.



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Sources: ¹National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, *Fit for Two Tips for Pregnancy* (Accessed August 2009): <http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/two.htm>

²Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Folic Acid for Healthy Babies, December 2005* (Accessed August 2009): <http://www.cdc.gov/folicacid>

³U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Pregnancy Nutritional Needs* (Accessed August 2009): http://www.mypyramid.gov/mypyramidmoms/pregnancy_nutrition_needs.html

⁴U.S. Department of Agriculture, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, *Food Don'ts*, March 5, 2009 (Accessed August 2009): http://www.womenshealth.gov/pregnancy/mom-to-be-tools/pregnancy_food_donts.pdf

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