

Weight Gain During Pregnancy



How much weight should I gain during my pregnancy?

The healthiest weight gain for you during pregnancy depends on your body mass index (BMI) before you were pregnant. Your BMI is based on your height and weight. Your BMI number will tell you if you are underweight, normal, overweight, or obese. You can use the chart at the top of the next page to find your BMI number. If you have a BMI of 25 or more before you start pregnancy, it is healthiest if you gain less weight during pregnancy.

Prepregnancy Weight	Healthy Weight Gain During Pregnancy
Underweight (BMI less than 18.5)	28 to 40 pounds
Normal (BMI between 18.5 and 24.9)	25 to 35 pounds
Overweight (BMI between 25 and 29.9)	15 to 25 pounds
Obese (BMI 30 or more)	11 to 20 pounds

How much should I eat during pregnancy?

In the first trimester of pregnancy, many women feel nauseous (sick to your stomach) or cannot stand some food smells. This can make it hard to eat a regular meal. When you are pregnant, you need to eat about 400 more calories per day than when you are not pregnant. You will feel better if you eat something every few hours. Eating small meals 5 or 6 times each day rather than larger meals less often will help you feel better and make sure your baby has a steady supply of food.

What should I eat during pregnancy?

Your baby's growth depends on what you eat, so you need to eat healthy foods. Eat at least 5 servings of fruit and vegetables a day. Eat whole grain foods such as brown rice or whole wheat bread. Include some protein, such as meat or peanut butter, whenever you eat. Cut down on fats by eating less fried foods, whole milk, and fatty meats. Limit foods with a lot of sugar, such as desserts and soft drinks.

What happens if I do not gain enough weight?

If you do not gain enough weight or if you lose weight during pregnancy, your baby has a chance of being born prematurely (early) or not weighing enough at birth. Babies born early or too small can have trouble breathing and eating in the first days after birth. A small number of babies who are premature or too small at birth have trouble learning when they are older and in school. Talk with your health care provider about how much weight gain during your pregnancy is the healthiest for you and your baby.

What happens if I gain too much weight?

If you gain more weight than is recommended, you have a higher chance of getting gestational diabetes or high blood pressure during pregnancy. Your baby has a chance of weighing more than usual, and you are more likely to need a cesarean birth. Women who gain too much weight in pregnancy have a harder time losing the weight after giving birth. Their babies have a higher chance of being overweight as children. Exercise during pregnancy and eating a healthy diet can help you keep your pregnancy weight gain normal. It is not safe to diet during pregnancy.



What is my body mass index?

You can use this chart to find your BMI number. Be sure to use your weight before pregnancy.

Body Mass Index Table																																																
Normal						Overweight					Obese					Extreme Obesity																																
BMI	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49																	
Height (inches)	Body Weight (pounds)																																															
58	91	96	100	105	110	115	119	124	129	134	138	143	148	153	158	162	167	172	177	181	186	191	196	201	205	210	215	220	224	229	234																	
59	94	99	104	109	114	119	124	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	173	178	183	188	193	198	203	208	212	217	222	227	232	237	242																	
60	97	102	107	112	118	123	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	174	179	184	189	194	199	204	209	215	220	225	230	235	240	245	250																	
61	100	106	111	116	122	127	132	137	143	148	153	158	164	169	174	180	185	190	195	201	206	211	217	222	227	232	238	243	248	254	259																	
62	104	109	115	120	126	131	136	142	147	153	158	164	169	175	180	186	191	196	202	207	213	218	224	229	235	240	246	251	256	262	267																	
63	107	113	118	124	130	135	141	146	152	158	163	169	175	180	186	191	197	203	208	214	220	225	231	237	242	248	254	259	265	270	278																	
64	110	116	122	128	134	140	145	151	157	163	169	174	180	186	192	197	204	209	215	221	227	232	238	244	250	256	262	267	273	279	285																	
65	114	120	126	132	138	144	150	156	162	168	174	180	186	192	198	204	210	216	222	228	234	240	246	252	258	264	270	276	282	288	294																	
66	118	124	130	136	142	148	155	161	167	173	179	186	192	198	204	210	216	223	229	235	241	247	253	260	266	272	278	284	291	297	303																	
67	121	127	134	140	146	153	159	166	172	178	185	191	198	204	211	217	223	230	236	242	249	255	261	268	274	280	287	293	299	306	312																	
68	125	131	138	144	151	158	164	171	177	184	190	197	203	210	216	223	230	236	243	249	256	262	269	276	282	289	295	302	308	315	322																	
69	128	135	142	149	155	162	169	176	182	189	196	203	209	216	223	230	236	243	250	257	263	270	277	284	291	297	304	311	318	324	331																	
70	132	139	146	153	160	167	174	181	188	195	202	209	216	222	229	236	243	250	257	264	271	278	285	292	299	306	313	320	327	334	341																	

Source: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute; National Institutes of Health; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

For More Information

Choose My Plate: Moms and Moms-to-be

<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/moms-pregnancy-breastfeeding>

CDC: Weight Gain During Pregnancy

<https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternalinfanthealth/pregnancy-weight-gain.htm>

Health Tips for Pregnant Women

<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/weight-management/health-tips-pregnant-women>

March of Dimes: Tracking Your Weight Gain

<https://www.marchofdimes.org/pregnancy/tracking-your-weight-gain.aspx>

Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level: 5.5

Approved March 2018. This handout replaces “Weight Gain During Pregnancy” published in Volume 55, Number 6, November/December 2010.

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