The Dietary Guidelines are the best basis for a healthy diet during pregnancy. Consuming a variety of foods can help women meet nutrient needs and promote healthy weight gain.

**Weight Gain and Pregnancy**

Normal weight women who gain LESS THAN 20 POUNDS are more likely to deliver too soon. Babies born too soon are less mature and apt to have low birth weight. Low birth weight babies often face severe short-term and/or long-term health problems, including:

- *Increased risk of illness or infection*
- *Delayed motor and social development*
- *Learning disabilities*

Do not attempt weight loss during pregnancy.

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**Continued on next page.**
### HOW MUCH SHOULD I GAIN?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weight Status (BMI*)</th>
<th>Rate of Gain** (pounds/week)</th>
<th>Total Weight Gain (pounds)</th>
<th>Twins (pounds)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Underweight (&lt;18.5)</td>
<td>1.0-1.3</td>
<td>28-40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal weight (18.5-24.9)</td>
<td>0.8-1.0</td>
<td>25-35</td>
<td>37-57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overweight (25-29.9)</td>
<td>0.5-0.7</td>
<td>15-25</td>
<td>31-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obese (&gt;30)</td>
<td>0.4-0.6</td>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>25-42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Body mass index (BMI) calculated using height and pre-pregnancy weight; **second and third trimester

### Where Does The Weight Go?

- Breasts: 2 pounds
- Blood and body fluids: 8 pounds
- Protein and fat: 7 pounds
- Baby: 6-8 pounds
- Uterus: 2 pounds
- Placenta: 1.5 pounds
- Amniotic fluid: 2 pounds

### How Many Calories?

- First trimester: Eat the same number of calories as pre-pregnancy
- Second trimester: Eat 340-360 calories more per day than pre-pregnancy
- Third trimester: Eat 450-475 calories more per day than pre-pregnancy

### Where Should the Extra Calories Come From?

- Whole grains
- Fresh fruits
- Vegetables
- Lean protein
- Low fat dairy

**Blood and body fluids: 8lbs.**  
**Protein and fat: 7 lbs.**  
**Baby: 6-8lbs.**  
**Uterus: 2lbs.**  
**Placenta: 1.5lbs.**  
**Amniotic fluid: 2lbs.**
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Nutrient</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Food Sources</th>
<th>Supplements</th>
<th>Total Needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calcium</td>
<td>Healthy teeth and bones; Allows muscles and nerves to work properly</td>
<td>Dairy products; Fortified juices; Tofu</td>
<td>Do not use a supplement with more than 2,500 milligrams calcium</td>
<td>1,000 milligrams per day needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choline</td>
<td>Brain and nerve development; Prevents birth defects</td>
<td>Eggs; Tofu; Lean beef; Brussels sprouts; cauliflower; broccoli</td>
<td>Do not use a supplement with more than 3,500 milligrams per day choline</td>
<td>450 milligrams per day needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folic acid</td>
<td>Prevents major birth defects of the neural tube (brain, spine, spinal cord)</td>
<td>Fortified cereals; Grains; Pastas; Spinach; Legumes; Citrus juices;</td>
<td>More easily absorbed than food sources Begin taking before pregnancy</td>
<td>600 micrograms per day needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iodine</td>
<td>Brain and nervous system</td>
<td>Plain yogurt; Cottage cheese; Baked potato with peel; Navy beans</td>
<td>Use a supplement that does not have more than 1,100 micrograms iodine</td>
<td>250 micrograms per day needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron</td>
<td>More iron needed for the increasing amount of blood in the body</td>
<td>Lean red meat; fish; Poultry; Dried fruits Iron-fortified cereal; Sunflower seeds; Dark leafy greens</td>
<td>Recommended to start in early pregnancy</td>
<td>30 milligrams per day needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omega-3 fats in the form of DHA</td>
<td>Brain and nervous system</td>
<td>Plain yogurt; Cottage cheese; Baked potato with peel; Navy beans</td>
<td>Use a supplement that does not have more than 1,100 micrograms iodine</td>
<td>250 micrograms per day needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin B-12</td>
<td>Prevents birth defects</td>
<td>Salmon; Canned light tuna; Meat; Poultry; Fortified breakfast cereals</td>
<td>Women who do not consume these foods should consider using a B-12 supplement</td>
<td>2.6 micrograms per day needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin D</td>
<td>Needed to absorb calcium for bones and to build the immune system</td>
<td>Fatty fish (catfish, salmon, tuna); Fortified milk; Eggs; Fortified juice; Fortified cereal</td>
<td>Do not use a supplement with more than 4,000 International Units of vitamin D</td>
<td>600 International Units per day needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**KEY NUTRIENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Supplements</th>
<th>Total Needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Needed to absorb vitamins</td>
<td>Milk; Juice; High-moisture foods: Fruit; Vegetables</td>
<td>There is no supplement for water</td>
<td>Women need 3 liters per day during pregnancy or 1 1 cups per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zinc</td>
<td>Needed for normal growth and development of the baby</td>
<td>Oysters; Red meat and poultry; Beans; Nuts; Whole grains; Fortified breakfast cereals</td>
<td>Do not use a supplement with more than 40 milligrams of zinc</td>
<td>12 milligrams per day is recommended for pregnant women under 18 years; 11 milligrams per day is recommended for pregnant women 19 years and older</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Talk to the doctor about prenatal vitamins. They may be free with a prescription.

**Common Complaints**

**Nausea and Vomiting (Morning Sickness)**

**Treatment Tips**

**Mild cases**
- Eat small meals more often
- Avoid strong odors
- Avoid spicy or greasy foods
- Drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration
- Fresh air

**Severe cases** (hyperemesis gravidarum) may include persistent vomiting, losing over 5 percent of body weight, electrolyte imbalance, and dehydration.
- Intravenous (IV) hydration
- Hospitalization may be required

**Constipation Treatment Tips**
- Drink more caffeine-free, low calorie beverages (water, juice, milk)
- Increase high-fiber foods in diet:
  - Whole grains
  - Whole fruits
  - Whole vegetables
  - Beans and legumes
- Be physically active

**Words of Caution**

**Caffeine**
Caffeine increases blood pressure and heart rate, and can increase fluid loss. Caffeine crosses the placenta to the baby. Less than 200 milligrams of caffeine (about 12 ounces of coffee) each day may not be harmful, but it is best to avoid it. Some sources of caffeine are:
- Coffee
- Tea
- Soda
- Energy drinks
- Chocolate
- Some over-the-counter medicine
Foodborne Illness (Food Poisoning)

Pregnant women and their unborn children are more likely to suffer from food poisoning than other people. Food poisoning is caused by bacteria, parasites or viruses found in food or drinking water. Safe food handling can prevent such foodborne illness. Some tips for avoiding food poisoning are:

- Wash hands and cooking surfaces often
- Separate raw food from cooked food
- Cook food thoroughly
- Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold
- Some of the following foods may be sold unpasteurized. Check labels and avoid if unpasteurized:
  - Raw milk
  - Fruit juice
  - Soft cheeses made from unpasteurized milk
- Avoid raw or undercooked meat, seafood and eggs
- Avoid ready-to-eat hot dogs and cold cuts, unless cooked to an internal temperature of 165 degrees F

Toxins and Pollutants

Locally caught fish may be high in pollutants. Women of childbearing age should eat no more than one meal per week of fish caught from local ponds, rivers, lakes and streams.

Some fish contain high levels of methylmercury, a toxin that may harm an unborn baby's nervous system. Pregnant women should not eat:

- Shark
- Swordfish
- King mackerel
- Tilefish
- Raw fish

These fish are low in mercury. Two-three servings per week are recommended:

- Canned light tuna
- Salmon
- Tilapia
- Catfish
- Shrimp

Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is the best nutrition for infants.

During the first year of life:

- Breast milk contains all the nutrients a baby needs
- Breast milk strengthens the immune system
- Breast milk protects the baby from developing allergies
- Breastfeeding reduces risk for
  - Ear infections
  - Asthma
  - Respiratory infections
  - Diarrhea
  - Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)

Later in life:

- Breast fed babies have fewer dental cavities
- Breast fed babies are less likely to suffer from chronic diseases:
  - Obesity
  - Type 2 diabetes
  - Heart disease
  - Hypertension
  - High cholesterol
Breastfeeding is good for mothers, too.

Breastfeeding:

• Helps mothers return to pre-pregnancy weight more quickly
• Helps the uterus return to pre-pregnancy size more quickly
• Requires no mixing, heating or sanitizing
• Helps mothers feel close to their babies
• Reduces risks for mothers developing some diseases later in life:
  - Osteoporosis
  - Certain cancers
  - Type 2 diabetes

Local county health departments can provide breastfeeding support. The Kentucky Department for Public Health maintains a Breastfeeding Resource Guide online: http://kybreastfeeding.com. This resource guide provides information about Kentucky WIC services, finding a lactation consultant, the La Leche League, and local breastfeeding support groups.

Healthy nutrition and lifestyle choices benefit the entire family!