
PURPOSE:

This diet is designed to provide the increased nutrients during pregnancy that are essential for the health of the mother and the well-being of the baby.

DESCRIPTION:

Foods from all basic food groups are included in quantities to meet the increased nutrient needs of pregnancy. Nutrient needs that are markedly increased include calories, protein, iron, folic acid and calcium. Alcohol should be avoided during pregnancy.

BASIC INFORMATION:

Weight Gain: Recommendations for the range of total weight gain and the pattern of weight gain should be based on prepregnancy weight for height. The pattern of weight gain is as important as total weight gain during pregnancy. Weight gain should be recorded on a chart that shows weight gain by gestational age.

Pregnancy Weight Gain Recommendations

| Prepregnancy Weight | Total Weight Gain | Rate of Gain for 2nd and 3rd Trimesters |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Normal Weight | 25-35 pounds | 1 pound/week |
| Underweight | 28-40 pounds | More than 1 pound/week |
| Overweight | 15-25 pounds | 2/3 pound/week |
| Twins | 30-35 pounds | 1-1/2 pounds/week |

Nutrient Supplements

Assessment of dietary intake should be completed for every pregnant woman. The increased nutrient needs of pregnancy can generally be met with slight changes in dietary habits.

Daily supplementation of 30 mg ferrous iron is usually prescribed for pregnant women in the second and third trimester. For those women with limited intakes of fruit, juices, leafy green vegetables or whole grains, folate may be prescribed.

Prenatal vitamin and mineral supplements should be provided for women with inadequate diets and for high risk populations. Excessive vitamin and mineral intakes should be avoided because of potential toxic effects in pregnancy. Vitamin and mineral supplements for use during pregnancy should not contain more than twice the recommended amount for adults.

Anemia

Iron deficiency is the most common cause of anemia in pregnancy. Iron needs markedly increase in pregnancy. Supplements of 2 mg copper and 15 mg zinc per day may be prescribed for women taking iron supplements of more than 30 mg per day.

Eat foods high in iron such as beef, pork, lamb and organ meats; iron fortified cereals; dried beans, peas, or lentils; dark green leafy vegetables; peanut butter and molasses. Combine foods high in Vitamin C with iron-rich foods. Use cast-iron cookware, if possible.

Caffeine

Although data from human studies do not provide significant evidence that caffeine affects pregnancy outcome, the Food and Drug Administration advises that pregnant women eliminate or limit consumption of caffeine-containing beverages such as coffee, tea and colas.

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Diabetes Mellitus

Pregnant women with any type of diabetes need special medical and nutritional care. Women with diabetes mellitus should achieve good blood sugar control prior to becoming pregnant. All other women should be screened for diabetes at 24 to 28 weeks of pregnancy.

Food Safety

Foodborne illness is especially dangerous for pregnant women. To avoid exposure to *Listeria*, pregnant women should avoid unpasteurized milk and soft cheeses; carefully follow “keep refrigerated” and “use by” dates; and thoroughly reheat processed meats such as hot dogs. To prevent toxoplasmosis, pregnant women should wash hands after handling cats, not clean cat litter boxes, avoid eating raw or partially cooked meats and wash hands after handling raw meat.

To avoid other foodborne diseases, proper foodhandling procedures should be followed including storing foods at proper temperatures; washing cutting boards and knives after contact with raw meat, poultry and seafood; and careful handwashing before and after handling food.

Hypertension

Immediate referral for medical treatment is essential for pregnant women with increases in blood pressure. A diet to meet the nutrient needs of pregnancy with ample but not excessive amounts of calories and protein should be encouraged. Sodium intake should not be restricted.

Pica

Pica is the practice of eating substances with little or no nutritional value. Pica in pregnancy often involves consumption of ice, dirt, clay or cornstarch. Less frequently, matches, hair, charcoal, cigarette ashes, mothballs, baking soda and coffee grounds may be eaten.

Nutritious food may be displaced by pica substances. Items such as starch that provide calories may result in excessive weight gain. Pica substances may contain toxic elements or interfere with mineral absorption, such as iron.

Pica has been associated with iron deficiency. If either iron deficiency or pica is identified during pregnancy, assessment should be initiated to see if the other problem exists.

Sodium

Normal sodium intake is needed during pregnancy to support the large prenatal expansion of tissues and fluids. Sodium should not be restricted.

Teen Pregnancy

Teens should gain weight at the upper end of the appropriate weight for height ranges. Teens are at high risk for iron deficiency and inadequate calorie intake. Eating regular meals and choosing healthy foods are especially important for teenagers.

Vegetarian Diets

Pregnant women consuming vegetarian diets need careful nutritional assessment. The type of vegetarian diet will determine the potential for nutrient deficiencies with increased risk as more foods are excluded. Most pregnant women consuming milk and eggs can meet the increased nutrient needs of pregnancy. Vegan diets will require careful planning to consume adequate protein from complementary plant proteins. Alternate sources of Vitamin B₁₂ and calcium will be needed in a vegan diet. Iron status should be carefully monitored. Low prepregnancy weight and less than optimal weight gain are common problems for vegans. High calorie foods such as nuts, nut butter, wheat germ, avocados, dried fruit, coconut, honey and salad dressings may be needed.

NUTRITIONAL ADEQUACY: This diet is designed to provide adequate amounts of calories, protein, vitamins, minerals and other nutrients to meet the nutritional needs of a pregnant woman.

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Daily Food Guide for Pregnant Women

| Food Group and Recommended Serving | Serving Size |
|--|---|
| <p>Dairy Foods (4 Servings) Rich in calcium, protein, vitamins & minerals Sources: Milk, yogurt, cheese, salmon, dark leafy greens, cottage cheese</p> | <p>1 cup milk or yogurt 1/3 cup dry milk powder 1-1/2 ounces cheese 2 cups cottage cheese 1/2 cup canned salmon 2 cups dark leafy greens</p> |
| <p>Protein Foods (6 Servings) Rich in protein, iron and B Vitamins Sources: Beef, pork, lamb, chicken, fish, eggs, cheese, cottage cheese, tofu, peanut butter, dried beans or peas, nuts, seeds</p> | <p>1 ounce meat, chicken, or fish 1/4 cup tuna, cottage cheese or tofu 1 egg, or 1 ounce cheese 2 tablespoons peanut butter 1/2 cup dried beans or peas 1/3 cup nuts, or 1/4 cup seeds</p> |
| <p>Vitamin A Rich Fruits and Vegetables (1 Serving) Rich in vitamin A and fiber Sources: Carrots, spinach, dark leafy greens, sweet potatoes, winter squash, chili peppers, red peppers, tomatoes, cantaloupe, mango, papaya, apricots, vegetable juice cocktail</p> | <p>1/2 cup cooked vegetables 1 cup raw dark leafy greens 2 tablespoons chili peppers 1/2 cup red pepper 2 medium tomatoes 6 ounces vegetable juice cocktail 1/2 cup raw green onions 1/4 cup dried or 3 raw apricots 1/2 medium papaya 1/4 medium cantaloupe or mango</p> |
| <p>Vitamin C Rich Fruits and Vegetables (1 Serving) Rich in vitamin C and fiber Sources: Oranges, grapefruit, tangerines, lemons, cantaloupe, kiwi fruit, strawberries, mango, papaya, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, chili peppers, red and green peppers, tomatoes</p> | <p>6 ounces citrus juice 1 orange or lemon 1/2 grapefruit or 2 medium tangerines 1/4 medium cantaloupe or papaya 1 medium kiwi fruit or mango 1/2 cup strawberries 1/2 cup broccoli, Brussels sprouts, or cauliflower 1 cup raw or 1/2 cup cooked cabbage 2 tablespoons raw chili pepper 1/2 cup red or green peppers 2 medium tomatoes</p> |
| <p>Other Fruits and Vegetables (3-7 Servings) Rich in other vitamins, minerals and fiber Sources: Apples, bananas, grapes, peaches, pears, pineapple, plums, watermelon, green beans, beets, corn, cucumbers, lettuce, peas, potatoes, radishes, zucchini</p> | <p>1 piece fresh fruit 1/2 cup canned or cooked vegetables 1 cup raw vegetables 1/4 cup dried fruits or vegetables</p> |
| <p>Bread and Cereals (6-11 Servings) Rich in B vitamins, iron and fiber Sources: Breads, tortillas, crackers, hot and cold cereals, rice, noodles, macaroni</p> | <p>1 slice bread 1 roll 1 tortilla 1/2 cup rice or pasta 3/4 cup cold cereal 1/2 cup cooked cereal 1 ounce cracker</p> |
| <p>Fats Provide vitamin A and essential fatty acids Sources: Butter, margarine, oils, bacon, salad dressings, olives, avocados</p> | <p>As needed to meet calorie needs. Use in moderation. Fats occur normally in foods such as meat, poultry, and dairy products.</p> |
| <p>Fluids</p> | <p>Drink 8 glasses of liquids each day. Avoid drinks high in sugar and caffeine. Don't drink any alcoholic beverages.</p> |

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SAMPLE MENU

| Suggested Meal Plan | Suggested Foods and Beverages |
|---|---|
| BREAKFAST Citrus Fruit or Juice Cereal Meat or Meat Substitute Bread/Margarine Milk/Beverage | Orange Juice Oatmeal Scrambled Egg Whole Wheat Toast/Jelly/Margarine Skim Milk, Decaffeinated Coffee |
| DINNER - NOON OR EVENING Meat or Meat Substitute Potato/Substitute Vegetable and/or Salad Dessert Bread/Margarine Milk/Beverage | Baked Chicken Sweet Potato Green Beans, Coleslaw Strawberries Whole Wheat Roll/Margarine Skim Milk, Water |
| AFTERNOON SNACK Milk/Fruit | Fruited Yogurt |
| SUPPER - EVENING OR NOON Soup or Juice Meat or Meat Substitute Potato/Substitute Vegetable and/or Salad Dessert Bread/Margarine Milk/Beverage | Vegetable-Bean Soup Meatballs with Tomato Sauce Spaghetti Spinach Salad with Dressing, Zucchini Rice Pudding Garlic Bread Skim Milk, Decaffeinated Iced Tea |
| EVENING SNACK Milk, Bread, Fruit | Peanut Butter, Whole Wheat Toast Apple Juice |

Nutrient Analysis

| | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------|------------|---------|------------|---------|
| Calories | 2563 Kcal | Vitamin A | 4631 IU | Calcium | 1741 mg |
| Protein | 130 gm | Vitamin C | 209 mg | Phosphorus | 2332 mg |
| Carbohydrate | 355 gm | Niacin | 29 mg | Zinc | 7 mg |
| Fat | 76 gm | Riboflavin | 3.0 mg | Iron | 19 mg |
| Cholesterol | 427 mg | Thiamin | 1.7 mg | Sodium | 4637 mg |
| Dietary Fiber | 34 gm | Folate | 392 mcg | Potassium | 5473 mg |

Adapted from the Arizona Diet Manual (revised 1992)