

Pregnancy - Common Symptoms and Care Tips  
Article

# Pregnancy Care Tips - Staying Healthy for You and Your Baby

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## THE 4 DOS AND DON'TS FOR A HEALTHY PREGNANCY

• Healthy eating and balanced diet are important steps towards a **happy and healthy lifestyle**<sup>1</sup>. Good eating habits during pregnancy are more important than ever and pregnancy is a critical period for you and your baby.<sup>2</sup> **In fact, maternal pre-pregnancy weight and maternal food intake may affect the short- and long-term health of the baby** and may be associated with the baby's food intake during childhood and adulthood.<sup>3,4</sup>



### How much food should you eat?

• Being pregnant **doesn't mean** that you will be eating for two or doubling your calories per day.  
• During the 1st trimester, **most woman will still be eating the same calories that you used to before getting pregnant** and no extra calories are needed.<sup>5,6</sup>  
• During the 2nd trimester, **most woman will need an extra 340 calories per day as your baby will start growing and developing.**<sup>7</sup>  
• During the 3rd trimester, most woman will need an **extra 450 calories per day** as your baby will be growing in size and weight.<sup>7</sup>

• The additional calories should come from **nutrient dense foods such as whole-wheat breads**, lean proteins, low-fat dairy products, fruits, and vegetables and not from **fruit juices, high sugary beverages, junk foods or sweets.**<sup>8</sup>

### Which foods should you eat, and which should you avoid?

• It is recommended for you to **be eating a balanced, varied diet that includes all food groups.**<sup>1</sup>

- Grains: Breads, cereals, pastas that are made with **wholegrain flour, brown rice and all types of wholegrain toasts and tortillas.**
- Fruits: All types of fruits. **Try limiting fruit juices and dried fruits** with added sugar
- Vegetables: Fresh, frozen, or **canned with no added salt.**
- Proteins: **Lean meat, poultry, fish, eggs, legumes, and nuts**
- Dairy: **Low fat or fat free milk, cheese, and yogurt**
- Fat: **Olive oil, avocado, seeds, and nuts**



• The following types of foods are recommended to be **avoided for your baby's safety and yours:**<sup>9</sup>

- Raw or undercooked seafood
  - Unpasteurized soft cheeses (like feta, Brie, and goat cheese)
  - Raw meats, poultry, or eggs
  - Unpasteurized juices or milk
  - Cold cuts (deli meat, hotdog...)
  - Raw sprouts, including alfalfa, clover, radish
- Your appetite might change during pregnancy affecting your mood and food cravings.** Don't deprive yourself from pleasurable food such as sweets and junk food but make sure to enjoy them in moderation.

### Which drinks are allowed, and which are to be avoided?

- Make water your best mate by **drinking plenty of it**, it will help in preventing dehydration, constipation.<sup>10</sup>
- Limit your caffeine intake to no more than **2 cups per day**. Gradually reduce the amount of caffeine and remember that caffeine is not only in coffee but **also in tea and soft drinks.**<sup>4</sup>
- Avoid drinking alcohol as **"No safe amount"** is set to be consumed during pregnancy, and it was shown to **cause severe abnormalities in newborns.**<sup>10</sup>

### Should you exercise?

• Exercise is always recommended for pregnant woman as it contributes to the **maternal and fetal well-being.**<sup>11</sup> It is usually recommended to exercise for **150min a week by aiming for 30 minutes of moderate exercise on most**, if not all, days of the week.<sup>4</sup> Always consult with your doctor before engaging in any new type of exercise.<sup>12</sup> Exercising during pregnancy has been shown to have different benefits.<sup>13</sup>

- Managing weight gain and decreasing the risk of retaining the weight gained after pregnancy
- Improving your mood and energy
- Reducing backaches, constipation and swelling
- Improving your posture, promoting muscle tone and strength
- Strengthening your pelvic muscles can help with labor



• "Strike a balance between healthy weight gain and nutritional intake. Try to keep in mind that you are not eating for two, you are eating carefully for one"<sup>14</sup>, **move your body and enjoy the magical time of pregnancy.**

## REFERENCES

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# Healthy Pregnancy Tips: The 4 Dos and Don'ts

Healthy eating and balanced diet are important steps towards a happy and healthy lifestyle.<sup>1</sup> Good eating habits during pregnancy are more important than ever and pregnancy is a critical period for you and your baby.<sup>2</sup> In fact, maternal pre-pregnancy weight and maternal food intake may affect the short- and long-term health of the baby and may be associated with the baby's food intake during childhood and adulthood.<sup>3,4,5,6</sup>

Let's explore the **healthy pregnancy tips** together.

## How much food should you eat?

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- During the 1<sup>st</sup> trimester, most woman will still be eating the same calories that you used to before getting pregnant and no extra calories are needed.<sup>7,8</sup>
- During the 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester, most woman will need an extra 340 calories per day as your baby will start growing and developing.<sup>7,8</sup>
- During the 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester, most woman will need an extra 450 calories per day is needed as your baby will be growing in size and weight.<sup>7</sup>

The additional calories should come from nutrient dense foods such as whole-wheat breads, lean proteins, low-fat dairy products, fruits, and vegetables and not from fruit juices, high sugary beverages, junk foods or sweets.

## Which foods should you eat, and which should you avoid?

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- Vegetables: Fresh, frozen, or canned with no added salt.
- Proteins: Lean meat, poultry, fish, eggs, legumes, and nuts.
- Dairy: Low fat or fat free milk, cheese, and yogurt.
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Exercising during pregnancy has been shown to have different benefits:<sup>1</sup>

- Managing weight gain and decreasing the risk of retaining the weight gained after pregnancy
- Improving your mood and energy
- Reducing backaches, constipation and swelling
- Improving your posture, promoting muscle tone and strength
- Strengthening your pelvic muscles can help with labor<sup>3</sup>

*“Strike a balance between healthy weight gain and nutritional intake. Try to keep in mind that you are not eating for two, you are eating carefully for one”<sup>2</sup>, move your body and enjoy the magical time of pregnancy.*

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