

Tips for a Safe and Healthy Pregnancy

Weight Gain

Pre-pregnancy Body Mass Index (BMI)	Pounds
less than 18.5	28 to 40
18.5 to 24.9	25 to 35
25 to 29.9	15 to 25
30 and more	11 to 20

Vitamins and Supplements

Prenatal vitamin

- Take a prenatal vitamin that has 27 milligrams (mg) of iron and 800 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid.
- Take your vitamin with juice or water for better iron absorption.
- Try not to take your vitamin with milk or a calcium supplement. This will affect how the iron is absorbed.
- The amount of blood in your body will double during pregnancy. This will increase your need for iron.

Vitamin D

- You should get 1,000 to 2,000 IU (international units) of vitamin D each day from your diet and supplements.

Calcium

- You should get 1,200 mg of calcium each day from your diet and supplements.
- Three servings of calcium-rich food and your prenatal vitamin typically equals 1,200 mg of calcium.

Nutrition

- Limit high-fat foods and sweets.
- If your BMI is less than 30, your energy needs increase by 300 calories a day during the second and third trimesters of your pregnancy.
- Eat a lot of fruits and vegetables, whole grains and bran. This will help with constipation which is common in the first and third trimesters.
- Drink 8 to 10 glasses of liquids (at least 64 ounces) each day and even more if the weather is hot.
- Do not eat raw meat, raw fish, sushi and sashimi because they could contain harmful bacteria.

Caffeine

- Limit the amount of caffeine each day to 200 mg which is typically two 8-ounce cups of coffee, 3 cups of tea, or 2 cans of caffeinated soda. Don't drink it all at once.
- Coffee bought at coffee shops generally contains more caffeine than home-brewed coffee.

(over)

Sugar Substitutes

- Sucralose (Splenda®), aspartame (Nutrasweet® or Equal®) and stevia (Truvia®) are considered safe to use in pregnancy.
- Do not have saccharin (Sweet'N Low®). It's also found in diet fountain cola.

Exercise

- Most women can continue exercising during pregnancy, adapting their routine as pregnancy progresses.
- A good goal for exercise is 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week.

Dental Care

- Continue with your routine dental care.
- If you need dental work, it's OK to have Novocaine™.
- If you need X-rays, make sure a lead apron is used. Try to wait until after you're 14 weeks pregnant if possible.
- Do not have nitrous oxide (laughing gas).

Travel

- You can travel up to 36 weeks of pregnancy as long as you are not having a high-risk pregnancy.
- Schedule a prenatal appointment before you travel.
- Ask for a copy of your medical record to bring with you.
- Before you leave, know the nearest hospital name and phone number.
- Always wear your seatbelt.

Sexuality

- There are no medical reasons to not have sex during a normal, healthy pregnancy.
- Sex or a vaginal exam may cause light spotting.

Call your health care provider if the spotting lasts more than 24 hours, if the bleeding increases, or you are worried about the spotting or have any concerns.

- Your health care provider will advise you if you need to stop having intercourse or reaching orgasm.

Painting

- Open a window and have a fan running for ventilation.
- Use only non-toxic paint.

What Not To Do During Pregnancy

- Don't drink alcohol.
- Don't use drugs.
- Don't use tobacco.
- Don't change your cat's litter box. There is a risk for toxoplasmosis, an infection caused by a parasite found in cat feces.
- Don't use tanning beds, hot tubs or saunas.

Learn More

Over the months ahead you will have many questions. The book, "Beginnings: Pregnancy, Birth and Beyond," was designed as a guide to pregnancy and to help you prepare for labor, birth and early parenthood.

Don't hesitate to bring up any question or concern to your health care provider that you have during your pregnancy.