

Pregnant women and women planning to become pregnant need a variety of foods from all food groups. A varied and balanced diet can provide all the necessary nutrients needed for a healthy pregnancy. A balanced diet includes whole grains, fruits, vegetables, lean protein, low-fat or fat-free dairy, and healthful fats. Pregnant women have an increased need for certain nutrients and should avoid certain foods in order to protect their own health as well as the health of their baby.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Key Nutrients for Healthy Pregnancy

Folic Acid (Folate)

Daily requirement: 600 micrograms per day

Purpose: Folic acid reduces birth defects related to the spinal cord (e.g. spina bifida)

Sources: Fortified foods (cereals, pastas, breads), supplements, fresh fruits and vegetables

Iron

Daily requirement: 27 milligrams per day

Purpose: Iron reduces risk of anemia

Sources: Spinach, kale, leafy greens, beans, fortified cereals, lean meat, chicken, and fish. Eating vitamin C with iron helps increase iron absorption in the body.

Calcium

Daily requirement: 1,000 milligrams per day (or 3 servings of calcium-rich foods)

Purpose: Healthy development of a baby's teeth, bones, heart, nerves, and muscle. If the mother doesn't get enough calcium it will be taken from her bones for the baby.

Sources: Low-fat or fat-free milk, yogurt, cheese, or calcium-fortified cereals and juices.

Omega-3s (EPA & DHA)

Daily requirement: 8-12 ounces per week of safe to eat seafood

Purpose: Decreases inflammation and helps with infant brain and eye development

Sources: Seafood high in omega-3s and low in mercury (e.g. Salmon, trout, tilapia, cod, shrimp, crab, sardines, canned light tuna),

Food Safety Tips

- Avoid seafood with high mercury content such as: king mackerel, shark, swordfish, and tilefish
- Avoid raw fish, including sushi
- Avoid unpasteurized (raw) juice or milk
- Avoid foods made from unpasteurized milk (e.g. some soft cheeses such as feta, queso blanco, queso fresco, Brie, Camembert, and blue-veined cheese)
- Wash your hands often, especially before, during, and after meal preparation
- Cook meat to proper temperatures and do not eat meat that is not fully cooked.
- Do not eat raw or undercooked eggs, raw sprouts, deli salads

Calorie Needs

1st trimester:

no additional calories required

2nd trimester:

340 additional calories needed per day

3rd trimester:

450 additional calories needed

Resources

- eatright.org
- choosemyplate.gov
- wic.utah.gov
- fns.usda.gov
- wicworks.nal.usda.gov
- usda.gov
- acog.org
- americanpregnancy.org
- BYU Student Health Center
801-422-2771
health.byu.edu

Tip #1 – Vitamin & mineral supplements
Because nutrient needs are elevated during pregnancy your doctor will most likely prescribe a vitamin and mineral supplement. This should be taken in addition to, not in place of, a healthy diet.

Tip #2 – Nausea
To help reduce nausea try the following: eat small, frequent meals to prevent nausea; drink plenty of water to stay hydrated; sipping ginger-ale may help calm an upset stomach.

Tip #3 – Gas, bloating, and constipation
Tips for reducing these symptoms:
• low-impact exercise (e.g. walking)
• regularly consuming fiber from whole grains, fruits, and vegetables
• avoid beans and other gas-producing foods

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