

Nutrition During Pregnancy

Having a healthy baby depends mostly on you. What you eat matters to your baby and your health. During pregnancy, you will likely need about 300 more calories per day than before you became pregnant. Each day, try to eat the number of servings listed here for each food group. In addition, cut down on salt and caffeine. Limit the amount of sweets and high-fat foods you eat. Don't smoke or drink alcohol.



Important: See your healthcare provider as often as asked. If you have any questions, be sure to ask them.

Fruits	Vegetables	Grains & Cereals*	Fats & Oils
2 cups		6 to 8 ounces	
Examples of 1-cup servings:	2-1/2 to 3 cups	Examples of 1-ounce servings:	
1 medium apple	Examples of 1 serving:	1 slice bread	
1 medium orange	2 cups raw, leafy greens	1/2 cup cooked rice	6 to 8 teaspoons
1 medium banana	1 cup raw or cooked cut-up vegetables	1/2 cup cooked cereal	
1 cup chopped fruit	1 cup 100% vegetable juice (pasteurized)	1/2 cup pasta	
1 cup 100% fruit juice (pasteurized)		1 ounce cold cereal	
1/2 cup dried fruit			
Dairy**	Protein***	Fluids	
3 cups	5 to 6-1/2 ounces	8 or more 8-ounce glasses	
Examples of 1-cup servings:	Examples of 1-ounce servings:	Examples:	
1 cup milk	1 egg	Water	

1 cup yogurt	1 ounce of lean meat, poultry, or fish	Mineral water
1-1/2 ounces natural cheese	1/4 cup cooked beans	Clear soups, broth
2 ounces processed cheese	1 tablespoon peanut butter	
	1/2 ounce nuts	

***Note:** Choose whole grains whenever possible.

**** Note:** Try to choose low-fat foods; stay away from soft cheeses and unpasteurized milk.

***** Notes:** Don't eat raw or undercooked meats, eggs, seafood, fish, or shellfish. Some types of fish, such as shark, swordfish, and king mackerel, should not be eaten during pregnancy. Don't eat hot dogs, lunch meats, or cold cuts unless heated to steaming just before being served. Ask your healthcare provider about safe choices.

Prenatal supplements

A prenatal supplement is a pill that you take daily during pregnancy. It helps make sure you're getting the right amount of certain nutrients that are important to your baby. Ask your healthcare provider to help you choose the best one for you. Important nutrients during pregnancy include:

- **Folic acid.** It's best to start taking this supplement 1 month before you start trying to get pregnant. Folic acid helps prevent certain problems in your baby. During pregnancy, you need to take 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid every day for the first 2 to 3 months after conception. After that, 600 mcg is needed for a growing baby and placenta.
- **Iron, calcium, and vitamin D.** You may also be advised to take these supplements during pregnancy. They help keep you and your baby healthy. Take them at different times because calcium makes it hard for the body to absorb iron. Taking iron with orange juice helps to increase its absorption.