

Keeping Track of Your Weight Gain:

Based on my pre-pregnancy BMI of _____, my total weight gain goal is between _____ and _____ pounds.

In my first trimester I gained an average of: _____ pounds per week. I should gain _____ pounds per week.

In my second trimester I gained an average of: _____ pounds per week. I should gain _____ pounds per week.

In my third trimester I gained an average of: _____ pounds per week. I should gain _____ pounds per week.

Resources

Mother Risk (Toronto Hospital for Sick Kids) www.motherisk.org

About Kids Health (Toronto Hospital for Sick Kids) www.aboutkidshealth.ca/EN/ResourceCentres/PregnancyBabies/Pages/default.aspx

Public Health Agency of Canada www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-gs/guide-eng.php

Multiple Births Canada www.multiplebirths.org

Canada's Food Guide www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php

References

References are filed with the IWK Health Centre Family Resource Library

IWK Health Centre, Clinical Nutrition, Halifax NS

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Clinical Nutrition

Nutrition for Multiple Birth Pregnancy



Congratulations!



You've been told you are expecting more than one baby. A multiple birth pregnancy means you require more energy and nutrients from food because of the increased energy needs of multiple babies.

Some things may be different in a multiple birth pregnancy compared to a single birth pregnancy:

- Feelings of nausea and morning sickness can be more common because of higher hormone levels. If you have severe nausea or vomiting, talk to your doctor.
- Vitamin and mineral needs are greater.
- Calorie needs are higher.

Track your weight gain to see if you are eating too little, too much, or just enough. If you find you gain more than needed for a healthy pregnancy, eat a bit less. If you find you are not gaining enough weight, eat a bit more.

The extra calories needed for a multiple birth pregnancy can be anywhere from 150 to 800 extra calories per day. Your dietitian can help guide you if you are unsure.

Hint: The best way to know if you are eating the right amount is to track your weight gain against the table on page 5.

How Much Extra Should I Eat?

Women carrying multiple babies need to eat more. The amount of extra food required depends on your pre-pregnancy BMI and activity level.

Calorie Needs:

Activity Level	Usual calorie needs before pregnancy (per day)	Extra calorie needs for multiple pregnancy (per day)
Low Active	1800 to 2000 calories	150 to 400 calories
Moderately Active	1900 to 2100 calories	300 to 600 calories
Very Active	2100 to 2500 calories	500 to 800 calories

What to Expect:

You should gain between 25 to 55 lbs, based on your pre-pregnancy weight.

As you get closer to your due date and your babies start to take up more space in your body, you may find that you get full quickly after eating. To help with this, try eating several small meals or snacks throughout the day.

Nutrition is Important!

A healthy diet during pregnancy includes:

- Plenty of fruits and vegetables
- Nutrient-rich foods
- Sources of protein such as chicken, fish, pork, eggs, beef, legumes, and tofu
- Whole grain cereals and breads
- Dairy products
- Nuts, seeds, nut butters, healthy oils, and avocado
- Limited fried, fatty and salty foods

TIP

Follow *Canada's Food Guide* to help choose the best foods in your pregnancy.

Focus on foods that are healthy to help meet your nutrition needs.

Nutrients of Concern for You and Your Babies:

In a multiple birth pregnancy, there is a greater need for iron, folate (folic acid), calcium, vitamin B6, iodine, and omega 3 fatty acids. These nutrients are necessary to meet the needs of both you and your babies.

Taking a **daily prenatal multivitamin supplement** combined with a healthy diet can help ensure you and your babies receive everything needed for health and growth.

Hint

Some women find vitamin/mineral supplements make them feel sick. To help decrease stomach upset, try taking the tablet(s) with food.



Weight Gain for Multiple Pregnancy

Nutrition and weight gain are very important for a healthy pregnancy outcome. The amount of weight you should gain is based on your body mass index (BMI) before you were pregnant. BMI is a number based on comparison of your weight to height ($\text{bmi}=\text{kg}/\text{ht} (\text{m}^2)$). Your doctor or dietitian can help you determine your BMI, or you can calculate it at the Health Canada website:

www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/nutrition/prenatal/bmi/index-eng.php

The table below shows weight gain goals based on BMI.

BMI	Weight Gain (lbs)			
	First Trimester (per week gain)	Second Trimester (per week gain)	Third Trimester (per week gain)	Total
Less than 18.5	1.25 to 1.75	1.5 to 2	1.25	47 to 61
18.5 to 24.9	1 to 1.5	1.25 to 2	1	37 to 54
25 to 29.9	1 to 1.25	1 to 1.5	1	31 to 50
Above 30	0.75 to 1.25	0.75	0.75	25 to 42