

Eating for two? Pregnancy is a time to consider your nutritional habits more carefully to not only boost *your* health, but the health of your baby. The following list provides general nutritional guidelines for pregnancy.

- Calorie needs during the first trimester remain the same as before you were pregnant. For most women, this is a calorie range of 1600-2200 calories.
- During the second and third trimesters, you will need about an extra 300 calories each day (1900-2500 calories for most women) to support your growing baby and gain the appropriate amount of weight. If you are underweight or overweight, it's a good idea to talk to your prenatal care provider or dietitian.
- During pregnancy, your need for several nutrients increases. Choose plenty of fruits and vegetables; especially folate-rich dark green veggies and beans/legumes, iron-rich foods like cereals, meats, beans, and dried fruits, and calcium-rich dairy products or fortified soy products, cooked greens such as collards or kale, and almonds.
- Take a prenatal vitamin daily, but don't rely on it to make up for a poor diet. Your body will benefit the most from nutrients found in whole foods.
- Combat "morning sickness" and nausea by eating smaller, more frequent meals. Going too long between meals can make nausea worse! You may want to keep some crackers or dry cereal at your bedside to eat before you get out of bed in the morning. By the second and third trimesters you will most likely no longer experience morning sickness, but you may feel that your stomach can hold less food as your uterus continues to expand as the baby grows. You may find that small, frequent meals is still the best strategy for you and helps you to feel your best.
- Your need for fluids increases along with your increased blood volume during pregnancy. Use your thirst and urine color as a guide for how much to drink. Your urine should be colorless to very pale yellow; dark urine may be an indication that you are not drinking enough.
- Water and low-fat milk are good choices for meeting your fluid needs. Coffee, tea, colas and any other caffeine-containing foods or beverages should be limited during pregnancy. Current recommendations suggest that up to 200 mg of caffeine (the amount in about 2-8 oz cups of coffee) daily is safe for most pregnant women.
- Constipation and hemorrhoids are common complaints during pregnancy. Aim for at least 25-30 grams of fiber each day and drink plenty of fluids. Good sources of fiber include whole grains (oatmeal, whole wheat products, bran flakes, brown rice), beans, fruits and vegetables.
- What about those cravings and aversions? Food cravings and aversions are common and vary widely from woman to woman and even from pregnancy to pregnancy. Most food cravings are not necessarily healthy items, but it's o.k. to enjoy small amounts of the foods you crave. Just remember to aim for eating nutrient-dense foods 90% of the time, and "fun" foods 10% of the time. If you experience food aversions, listen to your body and don't force yourself to eat something that you don't want. The aversion will most likely pass later in the pregnancy.
- Don't forget about food safety. Pregnant women are at higher risk for certain food-borne illnesses that can also endanger the baby. Avoid soft cheeses such as Brie, Camembert, feta and goat cheese unless they are made with pasteurized milk—check the label to be sure. Do not eat deli meats including hot dogs unless they are thoroughly heated until steaming hot. Do not eat raw or undercooked meat, poultry or fish. Fish that are high in mercury including shark, tilefish, king mackerel and swordfish should be avoided. Tuna should be limited to no more than 6 ounces per week (opt for light tuna instead of white/albacore tuna). Eat up to 12 ounces total of other types of fish weekly; salmon provides a good source of the omega-3 fatty acid known as DHA which is important to your baby's brain and eye development. Choose wild salmon when possible, including fresh or canned.
- Lastly, remember that what you eat your baby eats, too! Beginning in the second trimester, your baby is able to detect the flavors in foods when he or she drinks the amniotic fluid. Try to eat a wide variety of foods to get an early start on expanding your baby's palate. Eating broccoli while you're pregnant just might help your baby become a broccoli lover!

