

HEALTHY MOM Tips for Self-Care in the First Trimester



Healthy nutritional habits, rest, sensible exercise, and honest, compassionate care from your health providers all contribute to your goal of being a healthy mom with a healthy baby.

Good Nutrition for a Healthy Start

During pregnancy, your body needs extra calcium, folic acid, iron and protein for baby's development. Think in terms of filling a plate for each meal with half fruits and vegetables; a quarter with whole grains; and a quarter with a source of lean protein. Also make sure to include a dairy product at every meal.



Don't skip meals – but remember that good nutrition means more than good meals. Restrict your sugar intake (think water, not soda; nuts, not candy) and limit your caffeine intake to 200 mg a day.

SOMETHING FISHY

Women should eat at least two 8-12 oz. servings of cooked (not raw!) fish or shellfish per week while pregnant and while breastfeeding to get the omega-3 fatty acids that they need.

However, methyl mercury, a metal found in seafood such as swordfish, shark, king mackerel, tilefish and tuna steak, can harm baby's developing nervous system. It's best to avoid these, or at least limit all consumption to no more than once per month.

Choose "light" canned tuna over albacore "white" tuna, which also contains high levels of methyl mercury.

THE IMPORTANCE OF VITAMIN C

Vitamin C helps your body absorb iron, which in turn supports increased blood volume and reduces the risk of iron-deficiency anemia. It's also important for skin health and immune function. You'll also want to be sure to have at least one serving of vitamin C every day.

GOOD DIET, HEALTHY WEIGHT

Eating nutritiously, combined with moderate physical activity, will help you stay within the recommended weight gain range for pregnancy. This is generally 25-35 lbs., but ask your doctor about a healthy weight for you. Some moms may need to gain less and some more, depending on their pre-pregnancy weight.

A WORD ON SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS

If you follow a restricted diet for any reason, ask your doctor, a dietician or nutritionist if you should refocus your food choices or add supplemental nutrition. And if you're living with an eating disorder such as bulimia or anorexia nervosa, talk with a health professional and get help from a support group.

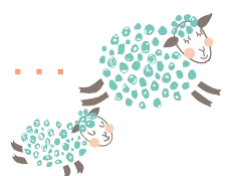
Wondering what to include in your diet? See the "Nutritional Guidelines for Pregnancy" and do your best.

ABOUT PRENATAL VITAMINS

In addition to a healthy diet, pregnant women need to take a daily prenatal vitamin to obtain some of the nutrients that are hard to get from foods alone, such as folic acid and iron. If you prefer a chewable vitamin, make sure to check the label, as some don't contain sufficient level of iron.

ABOUT NICOTINE, ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

Any substances that have no benefit for mom or baby are best to avoid: cigarettes, cigars and vape products; illegal drugs and narcotics; and some prescribed medications. Even over-the-counter cold medicines may not be completely safe for mom or baby; check with your pharmacist or doctor before taking any medicine.



Being Comfortable in Your Body

For most women, early pregnancy is marked by a feeling of exhaustion. Fortunately, any morning sickness usually ends around weeks 12-14, and most moms feel their energy return.

GETTING THE EXERCISE YOU NEED

While it's important to listen to your body and rest when needed, it's equally important to maintain a healthy level of activity. Try to get out to move at least three times a week. Most common activities are OK to continue while pregnant.

SEX AND INTIMACY

You and your partner may both be worried about having sex while you're pregnant. But for most moms,

it's fine to have sex throughout pregnancy – baby is safe in the protection of your uterus. If you're not feeling particularly well (that exhaustion again!), just being close may feel like the best form of intimacy. Ask your health care provider if you have any concerns.

BEST TIME TO GET AWAY

Travel during pregnancy generally is safe if you're healthy and not at risk for problems. The safest time to travel is between 18 and 24 weeks, when the risks for miscarriage and early labor are lowest. Also, it may be uncomfortable to travel in later pregnancy.

See the "Travel During Pregnancy: Care Instructions" to help you plan a safe and healthy getaway.

You and Your Care Team

Especially if you're a new mom, your first trimester is likely a time of many questions. You should feel free to bring any of your questions and concerns to your health care providers. You can expect honest and compassionate care for mom and baby.



YOUR FIRST TRIMESTER VISIT

If you haven't seen your health care provider recently, be ready to discuss your current health, your health history, and your family's health history. You may be referred to a genetic counselor if your provider finds health issues that could be passed on to baby.

Your provider will perform a complete physical exam, and if needed, may discuss with you how to control any

chronic health problems, such as asthma or diabetes, or strategies for losing weight.

Your provider will also order important lab work that can reveal potential risks to your health and baby's health. Have the tests done as soon as possible

KEEPING APPOINTMENTS

Your prenatal appointments serve to keep you and your provider up to date on your health, as well as baby's. Appointments will be once a month through the first and second trimesters (till 28 weeks), every two weeks in the early third trimester (till 36 weeks) and then weekly until delivery. (This may vary if you have special medical concerns.)

Need to change an appointment? Call your provider's office at least 24 hours in advance to reschedule

