

FREE
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Healthy Eating During Pregnancy

Healthy eating is especially important during pregnancy – for your own wellbeing, as well as your baby's. Eating 'unhealthy' foods, such as those high in fat and sugar, may cause your unborn baby to develop a preference for these foods during childhood and later life.

Eating healthy during pregnancy often just means changing the amount of different foods you eat so that your diet is varied and nutritious.

MYTHS

Myth: I need to start 'eating for two'.

There is no need to 'eat for two' during pregnancy.

- During the first 3 months of your pregnancy you do not need to eat any more than before you were pregnant
- After the first 3 months you may need to slightly increase the amount you eat; for example an extra piece of fruit each day
- The amount of food you need to eat will depend on your weight before pregnancy and how active you are
- While you may not need to start eating 'more' it is important to eat more nutritious food throughout your pregnancy



There is **no need**
to **'eat for two'**





Myth: Cravings are a sign of what the baby needs.

- Some women experience cravings for certain foods during pregnancy. There is no evidence that cravings are a sign that the baby needs certain foods
- Try keeping your cravings in check: limiting the quantities of foods which are high in fat or sugar and make sure your baby is getting the nutrients they need
- Listen to your hunger cues and try to only eat if you're actually hungry

WHAT SHOULD YOU EAT DURING PREGNANCY?

Similar to when you are not pregnant, a healthy diet is one which includes foods from each of the five food groups below. A healthy diet also includes plenty of water and limiting 'extra' foods such as chips, chocolate and sugary drinks.

Recommended serves per day during pregnancy:

Food group	Serves/day
 Vegetables and legumes/beans	5
 Fruits	2
 Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties	8.5
 Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, and legumes/beans	3.5
 Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives, mostly reduced fat	2.5

For more information on the five food groups and serving sizes for each, see your *Get Healthy Service Information Booklet*. The booklet also provides you with information about how to read food labels when you go shopping and what your plate should look like if you are eating a balanced diet.

SPECIAL NUTRIENT REQUIREMENTS DURING PREGNANCY

While all nutrients are important, pregnant women should increase their intake of certain nutrients that play an important role in the growth and development of the baby. They include:

- Iron: found in red meat, nuts and legumes
- Folate: found in green leafy vegetables, cereals, fruit and nuts. Folate supplements are recommended for at least a month before conception and throughout the first trimester
- Iodine: supplements are recommended throughout pregnancy and breastfeeding

See your *Having a Baby* book for more details on important nutrients and recommended supplements.

FOODS TO AVOID DURING PREGNANCY

There are some foods that you should avoid during pregnancy see your *Having a Baby* book for more details. If you are pregnant, planning a pregnancy or breastfeeding, not drinking alcohol at all is considered the safest option.

SMART SNACKING

Try to resist the urge to snack constantly. Try snacking on foods that are nutritious for you and your baby such as vegetables, dairy products, fresh or dried fruit, yoghurt, unsalted nuts, wholegrain fruit bread, cheese (reduced fat) and tomato on toast, or pita bread and fresh hummus.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS DURING PREGNANCY

You will find that your hunger changes as your baby grows.



At first you may feel nauseated, and may find it is difficult to eat a healthy variety of food.



Once you regain your appetite you may feel hungrier than normal. It's important to stock up on healthy snacks to keep you going.



Later in the pregnancy you may find it becomes difficult to eat because the baby is taking up more space. Eating little but often can help.

There are some helpful hints below for a range of issues:

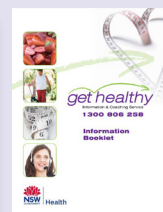
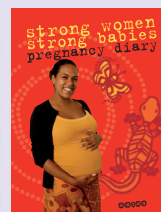
Problem	What might help
Constipation 	Eat a wide range of vegetables, legumes, fruit and wholegrains, and ensure you drink enough water every day. Keeping active also helps.
Nausea 	Have a snack (e.g. dry crackers or toast) before getting out of bed in the morning, eat 5-6 small meals daily, avoid spicy or greasy foods, drink water between meals but not at the meal.
Heartburn 	Don't lie down after eating and avoid spicy or greasy foods, fruit juice and caffeine. Eat little and often rather than large meals.

HOW TO AVOID EATING TOO MUCH

- Be aware of your hunger levels and appetite to avoid eating too much during pregnancy
- Eat healthy foods, or small portions, to avoid gaining too much weight during pregnancy

The *Get Healthy Service Information Booklet* provides you with some tips for action, including how to tell the difference between physical and emotional hunger, portion control and how to use the 'Hunger Scale' to stop eating when you become full.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION



www.gethealthynsw.com.au



your health coach



additional fact sheets

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