



WOMEN OF SIZE AND PREGNANCY

Women want to be healthy, especially when they are pregnant. A pregnant woman's health has an effect on her baby. It can be a special challenge when a woman starts her pregnancy carrying a lot more weight than she knows is healthy.

How Much Weight is Too Much?

Healthy weight has a wide range and depends on how active you are and your overall body frame. But there is a point at which weight begins to have a serious impact on health. Body mass index (BMI) is a way of checking if your weight is healthy for how tall you are. You can find your BMI by using the chart on the reverse side of this sheet. A BMI of more than 30 increases your risk of serious health problems, such as diabetes. A BMI of 40 or more is very hard for anyone to live with. It can be even more difficult if you become pregnant when carrying that much weight.

I Know it is Hard for Me to Carry This Weight, But Are There Risks for My Baby?

Yes. If you start a pregnancy carrying a lot of extra weight, there is extra risk that you will develop diabetes and blood pressure problems. Diabetes may make your baby grow larger, which makes it more difficult to have a normal birth. It may also make it more likely that your child will develop diabetes later in life. High blood pressure during pregnancy can increase the risk that your baby will be born too early.

I Know I'm Already Carrying A Lot of Extra Weight. Don't I Have to Gain More Weight for Pregnancy?

No. If you have a BMI of more than 40, you can go through your entire pregnancy and gain very little, if any, weight. If your BMI is less than 40 but more than 30, try to gain no more than 15 pounds. New studies have shown that women with a BMI above 30 are healthier and have healthier babies if they limit their weight gain during pregnancy. Limiting weight gain during pregnancy is not easy. It will take a lot of attention on your part. It also helps to have a good coach—or other health care provider.

I Have Never Exercised Much. Is it Safe to Start Now?

Not only is it safe, it is also very good for you. You probably walk a bit every day already. That's exercise! It is perfectly safe for you to walk 30 to 60 minutes every day. Wear comfortable shoes and clothes. Open your front door and walk away from your house for 15 minutes as fast as you can. If you can sing while you walk, you are not walking fast enough.

Eating Healthy in Pregnancy

You can be very healthy throughout your pregnancy without eating any extra food. The most important thing is that the food you eat is healthy and that your diet meets all of your nutrition needs.

Some Tips for Making This Work:

- Ask your health care provider if you can be seen more frequently during your pregnancy. At each visit, you will be weighed and will be able to talk with your provider about diet, exercise, and any other challenges you are facing. It is also good to get a pat on the back for all the work you are doing!
- Keep a daily log of all the food you eat and the exercise you have done. It is a great way to make sure you are getting the nutrition you need.
- Ask a friend to walk or exercise with you.
- Every day, take a few minutes and focus on your baby. You are growing a healthy baby. You can do this!



	Normal									Overweight					Obese									Extreme Obesity												
BMI	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49					
Height (inches)	Body Weight (pounds)																																			
58	91	96	100	105	110	115	119	124	129	134	138	143	148	153	158	162	167	172	177	181	186	191	196	201	205	210	215	220	224	229	234					
59	94	99	104	109	114	119	124	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	173	178	183	188	193	198	203	208	212	217	222	227	232	237	242					
60	97	102	107	112	118	123	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	174	179	184	189	194	199	204	209	215	220	225	230	235	240	245	250					
61	100	106	111	116	122	127	132	137	143	148	153	158	164	169	174	180	185	190	195	201	206	211	217	222	227	232	238	243	248	254	259					
62	104	109	115	120	126	131	136	142	147	153	158	164	169	175	180	186	191	196	202	207	213	218	224	229	235	240	246	251	256	262	267					
63	107	113	118	124	130	135	141	146	152	158	163	169	175	180	186	191	197	203	208	214	220	225	231	237	242	248	254	259	265	270	278					
64	110	116	122	128	134	140	145	151	157	163	169	174	180	186	192	197	204	209	215	221	227	232	238	244	250	256	262	267	273	279	285					
65	114	120	126	132	138	144	150	156	162	168	174	180	186	192	198	204	210	216	222	228	234	240	246	252	258	264	270	276	282	288	294					
66	118	124	130	136	142	148	155	161	167	173	179	186	192	198	204	210	216	223	229	235	241	247	253	260	266	272	278	284	291	297	303					
67	121	127	134	140	146	153	159	166	172	178	185	191	198	204	211	217	223	230	236	242	249	255	261	268	274	280	287	293	299	306	312					
68	125	131	138	144	151	158	164	171	177	184	190	197	203	210	216	223	230	236	243	249	256	262	269	276	282	289	295	302	308	315	322					
69	128	135	142	149	155	162	169	176	182	189	196	203	209	216	223	230	236	243	250	257	263	270	277	284	291	297	304	311	318	324	331					
70	132	139	146	153	160	167	174	181	188	195	202	209	216	222	229	236	243	250	257	264	271	278	285	292	299	306	313	320	327	334	341					

Source: Adapted from *Clinical Guidelines on the Identification, Evaluation, and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity in Adults: The Evidence Report*. Available from www.nhlbi.nih.gov/guidelines/obesity/bmi_tbl.htm [Accessed December 31, 2008].

Every Day, Make Sure That You Eat:

- Six servings of whole grain foods like bread or pasta. By reading the label you will know that you are really getting “whole” grain and not just brown-colored bread or pasta (1 slice of bread or half a cup of cooked pasta is a serving).
- Three servings of fruit. Fresh, raw fruit is best (1 small apple or half a cup of chopped or cooked fruit is a serving).
- Five or more servings of vegetables. Fresh, raw vegetables are best (1 medium-sized carrot or half a cup of chopped or cooked vegetables is a serving). Avoid butter, margarine, and fatty salad dressing. If you would like a topping on your vegetables, use nonfat salad dressing or nonfat yogurt.
- Three servings of protein- or iron-rich foods, like lean meat, fish, eggs, or nuts (a piece of meat or fish the size of a pack of cards is a serving).
- One serving of vitamin C-rich food each day—like oranges, grapefruit, strawberries, sweet peppers, mustard greens, or tomatoes (1 small orange is a serving).
- Three servings of calcium-rich food—like nonfat milk, nonfat yogurt, or mustard greens or chard (1 cup of milk or yogurt is a serving).
- Six to 8 large glasses of water. If you do not like the taste of water, add a squirt of lemon juice or a splash of your favorite fruit juice to the glass of water. You do not need to drink anything other than water or nonfat milk when you are pregnant.

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