



Diet in Pregnancy

The old adage of “eating for two” is one that we need to dispense with early in the process. In actuality, **eating for “1.2” should be adequate for most patients.**

When starting a singleton pregnancy with a normal body mass index, only about 300 more calories a day should meet the new nutritional demands.

Patients who are overweight or underweight need those guidelines adjusted and sometimes, in those situations, a nutritionist’s input can be a helpful addition.

Although the nutritional demands during pregnancy increase only a little bit, what we choose to eat while pregnant is important. While cravings influence our appetite, it continues to be important to pay attention to the variety of foods on our plate.

There is no specific pregnancy diet. Simply following the normal recommendations for healthy eating is the correct idea. Making sure to get adequate folic acid – at least 800 mcg daily – beginning preconceptionally to prevent neural tube defects, and then enough calcium to encourage healthy bone development – 1,000 mg per day either through supplements or food sources – is a good place to start.

Focusing on nutrient-dense foods such as lean proteins, low-fat dairy products, fruits, vegetables, and whole grains and incorporating a variety of these foods into the diet is ideal. That looks like this: 2-3 servings of vegetables of different colors, two servings of fruit, three servings of whole grains, and two to three servings of lean protein sources on a daily basis.

Protein-rich foods should be varied to include seafood, lean meats, eggs, beans, nuts, and seed sources.

Ideally, all women – especially those who are pregnant or breastfeeding – should incorporate two to three servings of a variety of seafood a week into this rotation to optimize the natural benefits of omega-3 fatty acids. The data suggest that this has not been the case, and it is important to emphasize these benefits to fetal and maternal well-being both for the short and long term.

Quite frankly, avoiding seafood is likely to pose more harm than otherwise. And there are only four types of fish that should be [avoided](#) during pregnancy: shark, swordfish, tilefish, and king mackerel. That leaves us with a long list of choices to fit varying tastes and budgets; everything from salmon and canned tuna to tilapia or cod and more can be safely enjoyed during pregnancy.

Vegetarian sources of Omega 3 fatty acids-flaxseeds, beans, mustard oil, green leafy veg, cabbage, blue berries, orogeno, mango, honey melon

