



Deciding What to Eat When You Are Pregnant

EXTENSION

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Eating healthfully during pregnancy is important to you and your baby. MyPlate can help you choose the foods you need. The plate has 5 food groups – each food group provides different nutrients that are important to your growing baby. In the first 3 months of your pregnancy, eating foods from each of the food groups helps you get all the nutrients you and your baby need. In the 4th to 9th month, the baby is growing faster. You still need a variety of food and about 340-450 extra calories each day. The extra calories should come from slightly more food from the food groups. Use the following chart to help you choose a variety of enough healthful foods to eat daily.

Food Group	1st Trimester	2nd & 3rd Trimester	What counts as 1 cup or 1oz
Grains Try to choose whole grains instead of refined grains.	6 ounces	8 to 9 ounces	1 slice bread 1 oz ready-to-eat cereal ½ cup cooked pasta, rice or cereal
Vegetables Eat more dark green, red, and orange vegetables and cooked dry beans. To add more fiber, eat beans and peas more often.	2½ cups	2½ cups	1 cup raw or cooked vegetables or juice 2 cups raw leafy vegetables
Fruits Eat a variety of fruit each week.	2 cups	3 to 3½ cups	1 cup fruit or juice ½ cup dried fruit
Milk, Cheese & Yogurt Choose low-fat or fat-free dairy foods.	3 cups	3 cups	1 cup milk 8oz yogurt 1 ½ oz cheese
Meat, beans & nuts The best choices are seafood (salmon, trout & herring), beans and peas, nuts, lean meats, poultry, and eggs	5½ ounces	6½ ounces	1oz lean meat, poultry, or fish ¼ cup cooked dry beans ½ oz nuts or 1 egg 1 tbsp peanut butter 1oz of nuts

Ideas for eating healthier meals

- Fill about half of your plate with colorful vegetables. Fresh, frozen, and canned vegetables are all healthy. When eating canned, choose those with reduced or no sodium. Foods such as collards, turnips, kale, spinach, romaine lettuce, beans, peas, lentils, and enriched grains like cereal all have folic acid. Folate/folic acid is needed during pregnancy to protect your baby from birth defects.
- At meals, choose fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk instead of sugar sweetened beverages like soda. Try drinking water between meals.
- For snacks, salads, and desserts, think about fruit. It can be fresh, frozen, or canned. Select 100% fruit juice.
- Choline is an important nutrient for the baby's brain development. Choline is found in foods such as eggs, meats, seafood, and beans.
- Use small amounts of healthy fat that come from plants instead of animals. Nuts have healthy fats. Add walnuts or almonds to your cereals or eat them for a snack. Use salad dressings made from olive oil and choose healthy fish like salmon 1-2 times a week.
- Substitute whole-grains for refined grains at meals and snacks. When shopping, look for whole-grain foods such as oatmeal, whole wheat pasta, brown rice and whole-grain crackers.
- Remember, all the nutrients you and the baby need should come from food first. To get enough folic acid, iron, and calcium, your doctor will recommend a prenatal vitamin and mineral supplement in addition to eating a healthy diet.

The Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service

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The Cooperative Extension Service is the largest, most successful informal educational organization in the world. It is a nationwide system funded and guided by a partnership of federal, state, and local governments that delivers information to help people help themselves through the land-grant university system.

Extension carries out programs in the broad categories of agriculture, natural resources and environment; family and consumer sciences; 4-H and other youth; and community resource development. Extension staff members live and work among the people they serve to help stimulate and educate Americans to plan ahead and cope with their problems.

Some characteristics of the Cooperative Extension system are:

- The federal, state, and local governments cooperatively share in its financial support and program direction.
- It is administered by the land-grant university as designated by the state legislature through an Extension director.
- Extension programs are nonpolitical, objective, and research-based information.
- It provides practical, problem-oriented education for people of all ages. It is designated to take the knowledge of the university to those persons who do not or cannot participate in the formal classroom instruction of the university.
- It utilizes research from university, government, and other sources to help people make their own decisions.
- More than a million volunteers help multiply the impact of the Extension professional staff.
- It dispenses no funds to the public.
- It is not a regulatory agency, but it does inform people of regulations and of their options in meeting them.
- Local programs are developed and carried out in full recognition of national problems and goals.
- The Extension staff educates people through personal contacts, meetings, demonstrations, and the mass media.
- Extension has the built-in flexibility to adjust its programs and subject matter to meet new needs. Activities shift from year to year as citizen groups and Extension workers close to the problems advise changes.

References

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