



Pregnancy Weight Gain for Underweight Moms

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EXTENSION

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Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Fact Sheets
are also available on our website at:
extension.okstate.edu

Your baby's health at birth is related to the amount of weight you gain while pregnant. If you do not gain enough weight, you will be at risk of miscarriage or your baby may be born too early and face health problems at birth. If you were underweight before pregnancy, you will need to gain between 28 to 40 pounds. Discuss your recommended weight gain with your doctor. Gaining weight can be hard for some people. Choose higher calorie, healthy foods from each of the food groups.

Tips to increase your calories

- Eat 4 or 5 small meals and snacks throughout the day. Set daily reminders on your phone to remind you when to eat.
- Drink whole milk. Add instant breakfast mixes to your milk for extra calories. When making hot cereals like oatmeal, use milk instead of water.
- Choose granola made with oats, nuts, and dried fruits instead of whole-wheat flake cereal.
- Cheese adds protein, calcium, and calories. Add it to egg dishes such as omelettes or scrambled eggs. Add fish, ground meat, or chicken to tomato-based pasta sauces.
- Instead of a baked potato, choose mashed potatoes and add cheese. Cheese is also great to add to your steamed vegetables like broccoli. Use oil-based salad dressings on your salads.
- Don't drink too much before eating since it can fill you up and make you less hungry.
- Do not drink more than 2-3 cups of coffee, tea, or other caffeine drinks because caffeine can lessen your appetite

Quick and easy snack ideas

- Whole-grain bagel or muffin
- Cereal or oatmeal with whole milk
- Whole-milk yogurt topped with fruit and nuts
- Peanut butter on whole-grain bread or sliced apples with whole milk
- Cheese and whole-grain crackers, vegetable sticks, 100% fruit juice
- Sandwiches with tuna, chicken, or egg salad with lettuce, tomato, and mayo
- Low-salt peanuts and sunflower seeds with 100% fruit juice mixed with club soda
- Raisins, peanuts, and whole-grain cereal mix
- Banana or pumpkin bread with a slice of cheese and an orange
- Canned fruit with cottage cheese

When to call the doctor

Gradual, steady weight gain is important during pregnancy. It's important to check your weight regularly. If you are having difficulty gaining weight, talk to your doctor about how you can reach a healthy weight during pregnancy.

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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