

DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR A HEALTHY PREGNANCY



Good nutrition is essential

From conception to exclusive breastfeeding (first 6 months) the baby completely depends on mother's nutritional status. Hence, good nutrition is essential for normal growth and development of the baby. It also keeps the mother fit and healthy. A healthy balanced diet during pregnancy should be rich in good quality proteins, essential fatty acids, iron, calcium, folic acid, B complex vitamins and vitamin C with optimum calories. "During pregnancy, what you eat is more important than how much you eat."

General guidelines

GUIDELINE 1

Meal pattern : Adhere to fixed meal times and follow a split meal pattern (eat small frequent meals).

GUIDELINE 2

Energy requirements : The daily calorie recommendation for a pregnant woman is based on pre-pregnant body mass index (BMI), maternal age and rate of weight gain in pregnancy. A pregnant woman needs only an additional 350 calories per day during the second and third trimester. These 350 calories can be met by adding 1 cup cooked rice + 1 phulka + 1 egg and 1 medium fruit to the daily diet.

GUIDELINE 3

Achieve a healthy **weight gain** within the recommended range.

Pre-Pregnancy BMI	Total wt. gain range in kg	Mean rates of wt. gain (kg/wk) in 2 nd & 3 rd trimester
Underweight (< 18.5 kg/m ²)	12.5 – 18	0.51
Normal weight (18.5–24.9 kg/m ²)	11.5 – 16	0.42
Overweight (25.0–29.9 kg/m ²)	7 – 11.5	0.28
Obese (> 30.0 kg/m ²)	5 – 9	0.22

Ref : IOM Guidelines, weight gain in pregnancy, 2009

GUIDELINE 4

Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods from the five food groups every day

- Plenty of vegetables of different types and colours. Include at least one vegetable salad and at least one serving of green leafy vegetables daily.
- Fruit as a snack daily. Include small quantity of dried fruits. Avoid fruit juices.
- Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties, such as brown rice, whole wheat and millets.
- Use of ragi, jowar, bajra and other millets is more beneficial than taking only rice and rice based products. Always use whole-wheat flour or fibre enriched flour.
- Take a blend of wheat flour and soya bean flour or wheat flour and roasted channa flour in the ratio of 4 : 1.
- Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, soya, nuts and seeds, and legumes / beans, pulses. These are good sources of protein and iron.
- Include at least one serving of whole beans and legumes (moong, moth, chana, rajma, lobia, green peas etc).
- Have 1-2 servings of fish a week to get essential omega-3 fatty acids.
- Consume sprouted grams and fermented foods.
- Have a milk, yoghurt, cheese, paneer diet to meet the calcium requirement in pregnancy. It is preferable to use low fat milk, i.e. toned (3% fat) or double toned (1.5% fat) milk.

GUIDELINE 5

Food safety and hygiene : Thorough washing or soaking of whole vegetables and fruits in salt water for 5 to 10 min, removes pesticides and germs.

GUIDELINE 6

Limit intake of foods containing saturated fat, added salt, added sugars and alcohol

- Total quantity of cooking oil to be used is 5-6 teaspoons (30 ml) per day. Preferably use groundnut, rice bran, til or soya bean oil. Include nuts such as cashew nuts, walnuts, almonds, pistachios, groundnuts, flaxseeds and til that are good sources of essential vitamins, minerals, fibre and essential fats (MUFA & omega -3 fats) in your diet.

- Avoid pickles, heavily salted foods like chips, pappads as they inhibit iron and calcium absorption.
- Avoid sweets, desserts, bakery items and processed foods.

GUIDELINE 7

Include plenty of **fluids**; the minimum intake should be 2-3 litres per day. Drink tea and coffee in moderation.

GUIDELINE 8

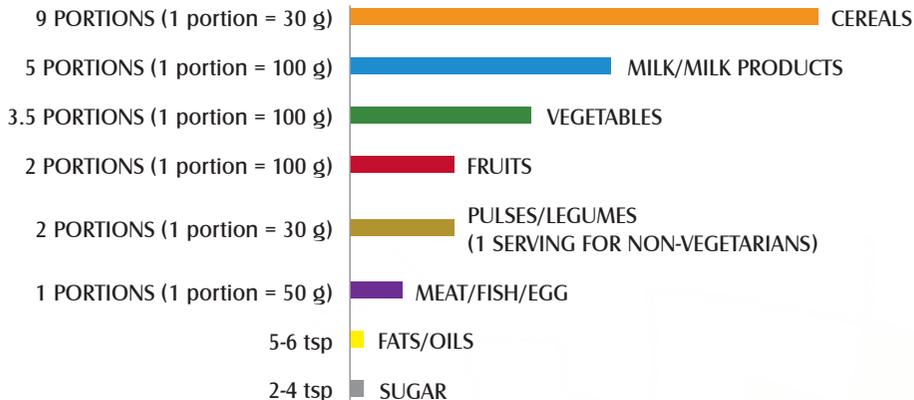
Ensure adequate **physical activity** suitable or convenient to one's lifestyle for at least 45 minutes a day.

GUIDELINE 9

Avoid **unhealthy practices** like smoking, alcohol consumption, tobacco chewing, as well as wrong food beliefs, myths and taboos.

Daily portions suggested

ESSENTIAL FOOD GROUPS



Ref. : *Dietary Guidelines for Indians, ICMR, 2011*

Number of portions will vary if a woman has BMI > 35 kg/m² or < 18 kg/m²

For a detailed nutrition counseling and prescription
by our team of nutritionists, call 040-40222397 for an appointment.
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