

DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR PREGNANCY INDUCED HYPERTENSION



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Pregnancy Induced Hypertension

Pregnancy induced hypertension (PIH) is a complication of pregnancy which is characterized by high blood pressure, swelling due to fluid retention, and protein in the urine. Careful management is required to prevent complications.

- A healthy balanced diet that is rich in good quality proteins, fibre, minerals and vitamins-rich foods with optimum calories should be consumed.
- Diet should contain adequate amount of sodium. Salt restriction is no longer routinely advised during PIH as research shows that during pregnancy the body needs salt to help provide the proper fluid balance.
- However, in case of edema or other symptoms of uncontrolled high blood pressure, sodium is restricted.

Dietary Guidelines for Pregnancy Induced Hypertension

1. **Meal pattern:** Adhere to fixed meal times and follow a split meal pattern (eat small frequent meals).
2. Eat a **balanced diet** with inclusion of a variety of foods every day.
3. Eat **cereals**, preferably whole grains, as the basis of most meals. 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.
4. Eat **legume**-based dishes (channa, rajma, lobia, moong dal, green peas etc.) regularly.
5. Eat plenty of **vegetables** – at least 3 servings and one serving of green leafy vegetables daily.
6. Eat **fruits** like oranges, sweet limes, water melons, musk melons, pears, guavas, figs, apples, and plums.
7. Consume **milk and milk products** (preferably low fat) daily. They provide calcium and are a good source of protein; especially for vegetarians.
8. **Eggs** and **lean meat** like chicken and fish should be consumed. Inclusion of fish at least twice a week is beneficial. Avoid red meat like mutton, beef and pork.
9. Include **nuts and seeds** in your diet; but choose unsalted varieties.
10. Stay hydrated. Consume at least 2-3 litres of **water** daily.

11. Continue to consume salt; but limit intake to 1 teaspoon/day. Opt for iodized **salt**.
12. Ensure that **food hygiene** is maintained.
13. Maintain an active lifestyle. Ensure adequate **physical activity** for at least 45-60 minutes a day.

Some important nutrients

Important nutrients to include in the diet are nitrates, zinc, calcium, magnesium and vitamin D. Their dietary sources are:

Nitrates: beetroot, spinach, lettuce, radish, turnip, cabbage and green beans

Zinc: chicken, beans, nuts, certain seafood, whole grains and dairy products

Calcium: milk, curds, tofu, cheese, butter, ragi, fish, green leafy vegetables

Magnesium: green leafy vegetables, legumes, nuts, seeds and whole grains

Vitamin D: fortified foods, egg yolk and oily fish

It is important to maintain a healthy body weight. The recommended weight gain guidelines are given below.

Pre-pregnancy BMI	Total weight gain range in kg	Mean rates of weight gain kg/wk) in 2 nd and 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

Certain foods should be restricted

- ✗ Table salt should not be used.
- ✗ Pickles, papads, biscuits, bakery items and preserved foods like sauce, chocolates, processed cheese, chips mixture etc.
- ✗ The use of saturated fats like ghee, butter, dalda, margarine, mayonnaise.
- ✗ Restrict caffeine containing beverages like tea and coffee. They bind dietary iron and make it unavailable. Hence they should be avoided before, during or soon after a meal.
- ✗ Avoid empty calorie foods like chocolates, soft drinks, fried items.

For a detailed nutrition counseling and prescription by our team of nutritionists,
call +91 40 40222397 for an appointment.

For any queries, please e-mail us at nutrition@fernandez.foundation