

Key Actions for Healthy Pregnancy Weight Gain

Step 1: Assess and Advise	Step 2: Consider Referral to a Registered Dietitian When*	Step 3: Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calculate pre-pregnant BMI at initial visit • Provide individualized weight gain recommendations based on BMI category (see table below) • Discuss an appropriate rate and pattern of weight gain • Discuss the benefits of appropriate weight gain and the risks of inappropriate weight gain/loss. • Assess readiness for change and barriers to change including language, cultural beliefs, education level and food access • Assist woman to identify realistic healthy living goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woman has a concurrent medical condition with an impact on nutrition (e.g. hyperemesis, bowel diseases) • Woman has an eating disorder, or a history of an eating disorder • Woman is less than 20 years old • Woman expresses concerns around weight gain or body changes • Pregnancy weight trend indicates inadequate or excessive weight gain • Woman has had previous bariatric surgery <p>* To refer to a registered dietitian in AHS, see "Resources" section</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reassure weight gain is an important part of pregnancy related to fetal development and maternal health • Reinforce consistent and appropriate weight gain (especially in the 2nd and 3rd trimesters) • Measure and document weight at each visit • Provide support for woman's healthy living goals • Offer appropriate resources and community programs

Guidelines for Weight Gain by Pre-Pregnancy BMI

Weight Category	Pre-Pregnant BMI	Message for Client and Total Weight Gain for Pregnancy*	Mean Weight Gain in 2 nd & 3 rd Trimesters*
Underweight	<18.5	Your BMI is low: Your recommended weight gain is 28-40 lbs • (12.5 – 18 kg)	1 lb/week • 0.5 kg/week
Healthy Weight	18.5 – 24.9	Your BMI is normal: Your recommended weight gain is 25-35 lbs • (11.5 – 16 kg)	1 lb/week • 0.4 kg/week
Overweight	25.0 – 29.9	Your BMI is high: Your recommended weight gain is 15-25 lbs • (7 – 11.5 kg)	0.6 lb/week • 0.3 kg/week
Obese	≥30	Your BMI is high: Your recommended weight gain is 11-20 lbs • (5 – 9 kg)	0.5 lb/week • 0.2 kg/week

* Institute of Medicine 2009 Guidelines

Key Messages for Healthy Pregnancy Weight Gain

Messages for ALL pregnant women

- Healthy eating and active living can make a positive difference to you and your baby's health.
- Enjoy physical activity daily or as recommended (see PARmed-X in "Resources" below).
- Follow Canada's Food Guide and consider tracking what you eat to assess your intake.
- Eat "twice as healthy", not "twice as much".
- After the first trimester, add 2-3 food guide servings daily. One extra snack is often enough.
- Eat regularly throughout the day by including 3 meals and snacks.
- Plan meals and snacks ahead of time. Be mindful of portion sizes.
- It is not recommended to lose weight or follow a weight loss diet during pregnancy.

Messages for women gaining BELOW the guidelines

- Using the IOM guidelines*, aim to gain more weight. This will help your baby be born at a healthy size and time.
- Increase your total daily calories:
 - Increase how much you eat by increasing your portion size at meals and snacks.
 - Increase how often you eat. Try for 6 small meals throughout the day.
 - Plan ahead and bring nutrient-rich snacks with you so you can eat on the go.
 - Ensure you are eating enough for your activity level.

Messages for women gaining ABOVE the guidelines

- Using the IOM guidelines*, aim to gain less weight. This will help your baby be born at a healthy size and time.
- It is not recommended to lose weight or follow a weight loss diet during pregnancy.
- Plan for 3 meals each day, including breakfast plus 1 to 2 snacks.
- Choose vegetables and fruit more often, e.g. make ½ your plate vegetables/fruit; keep cut-up vegetables on hand; try fruit for dessert.
- Choose water and low-fat milk to drink instead of sugar-sweetened beverages.
- Prepare food at home more often; eat out less and take out less often.

Resources

Alberta Health

- Healthy Eating and Active Living for Pregnancy booklet www.healthyalberta.com (and click on "Free healthy eating and active living resources")

Alberta Health Services

- Access to Food for Those in Need <http://bit.ly/access2food>
- What's a Healthy Portion Size? <http://bit.ly/healthyportion>

Health Canada

- Prenatal Nutrition www.healthcanada.gc.ca/prenatal-nutrition

Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology

- Physical Activity Readiness Medical Examination for Pregnancy <http://bit.ly/parmed-x>

To refer to a registered dietitian in AHS visit

- www.albertahealthservices.ca/nutritioninpregnancy.asp

To find out about prenatal programs in your area visit

- www.albertahealthservices.ca/services.asp?pid=stype&type=28