



WEIGHT GAIN DURING PREGNANCY

How Much Weight Should I Gain During My Pregnancy?

How much weight you should gain depends on how much you weighed before you got pregnant. Women who weigh less need to gain more. Women who weigh more need to gain less. The amount of weight you need to gain ranges from 11 to 40 pounds depending on your prepregnancy weight. The chart on the other side of this page can help you decide how many pounds you should gain. Talk with your health care provider about the right weight gain for you. Then use the chart to track your weight during pregnancy.

I Do Not Feel Hungry. Do I Have to Eat If I Do Not Feel Hungry?

Many women do not feel hungry early in pregnancy. This is because of hormone changes in the body. Later in pregnancy, it may be hard to eat because your stomach has less room between your baby and your lungs. You will feel better all through your pregnancy if you try to eat something every 1 to 2 hours. Eating a big meal may make you feel sick. Eating just a slice of apple, a carrot stick, or a bit of whole wheat bread will help you feel better if your stomach is upset. It is important to remember that what you put in your mouth goes to your baby. If you don't eat, your baby gets nothing to eat.

People Tell Me I'm "Eating for Two." Does This Mean I Have to Eat Twice As Much?

No. Most women only have to add about 200 calories every day to their diet. Many women can eat less and still be very healthy and grow a healthy baby. Your baby depends on you for all of its food, so you do have to eat well. Make healthy changes in your diet—eat at least 5 servings of fruit and vegetables a day, eat whole grain foods such as brown rice or whole wheat bread, include some protein whenever you eat, and cut down on fats. You don't have to eat much more than you normally do.

What Happens If I Do Not Gain Enough Weight?

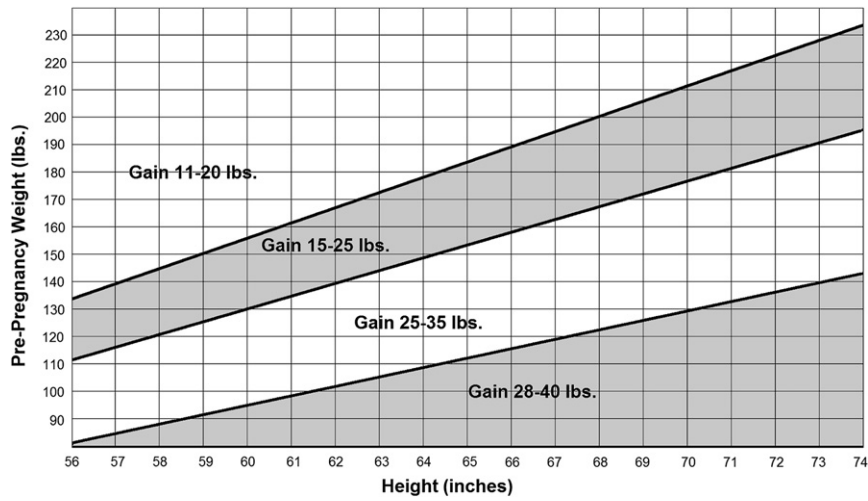
If you do not gain enough weight, your baby may be too small. Babies that are too small can have problems right after they are born. They may have trouble breathing or eating. Some babies who are too small at birth have trouble learning when they get older and go to school. Talk with your health care provider about how many pounds you should gain to make sure your baby is not too small.

What Happens If I Gain Too Much Weight?

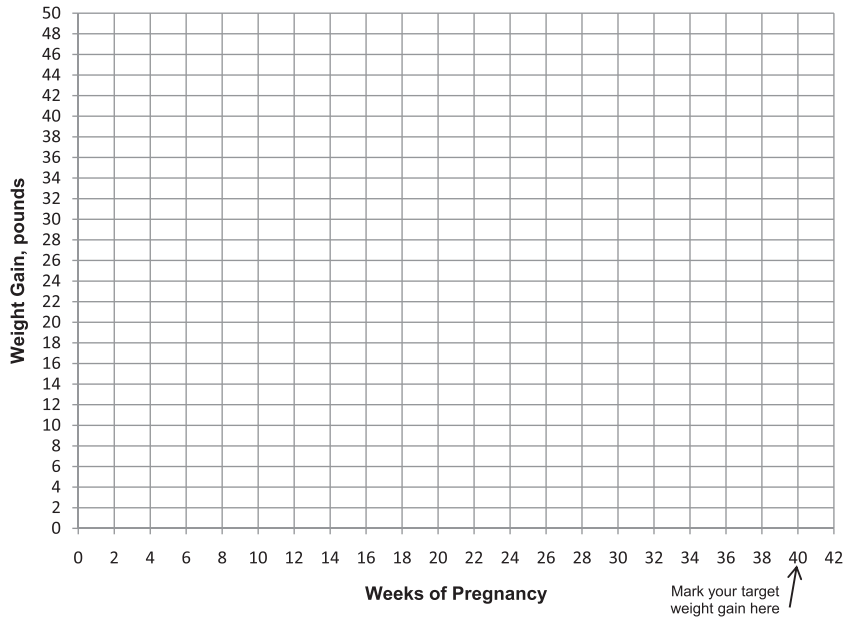
If you gain too much, you will have more weight to lose after the baby is born. Women who gain a lot of extra weight have a higher chance of getting gestational diabetes and needing a cesarean birth.

Should I Gain the Same Amount Every Week?

The baby will gain most of its weight during the last 2 months of your pregnancy. You should try not to gain much weight at first. Plan to gain most of your weight in the last months of your pregnancy.



My target weight gain is _____ pounds.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

March of Dimes: Weight Gain During Pregnancy
www.marchofdimes.com/pnhec/159_153.asp

MyPyramid for Pregnancy & Breastfeeding
www.mypyramid.gov/mypyramidmoms/index.html

Fit for Two: Tips for Pregnancy
<http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/two.htm>

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