Healthy Eating for Weight Control in Pregnancy (BMI>30)

IADAPT project
According to section 2.8 of the Statewide Maternity and Neonatal Clinical Guideline - all women with a Body Mass Index greater than thirty (BMI >30) should be offered nutritional consultation, ideally with a dietitian.

This project seeks to identify women who fit this criteria, and to provide them with information and support.

If you would like to speak with a dietitian, please phone 47962152 to make an appointment.

The Dietetics Department is located on the first floor of The Townsville Hospital.

How much weight should I gain?
The weight you should aim to gain depends on what your weight (and body mass index - BMI) was before you became pregnant. BMI is the number used to work out what is the recommended amount for you. If you were given a handheld record from antenatal clinic you may find your BMI in here. If not, you can work it out using the steps below.

1. My pre-pregnancy weight: ________ kg
   My height: ________ m
   (e.g. 165cm would be 1.65m)
   BMI = weight/(height x height) = _______ kg/m²

2. Another way to find your BMI is to use the graph below. From your height and weight trace your fingers along the lines until they meet. That is your BMI. Your dietitian or midwife could help if you are unsure of how to do this.

What should I do if I am gaining weight too quickly?
Gaining too much weight when you are pregnant can increase your blood pressure. To control your weight gain, limit foods that are high in fat and sugar. Make sure you are not 'eating for two'. It is also important to include regular exercise most days.

Limit the amount of fat you eat by:
- Limiting biscuits, cakes, chips and crisps
- Reducing the amount of fat in cooking
- Choosing low fat dairy products (e.g. milk, yoghurt)
- Avoiding cream and sour cream
- Trimming fat from meat before cooking
- Using healthy cooking methods like grilling, steaming, baking
- Removing skin from chicken
- Limiting high fat takeaway foods

Limit high sugar foods by:
- Drinking water, not soft drink or cordial
- Using “diet” or low joule products
- Limiting fruit juices to one glass per day as these are high in sugar (even 100% juice)
- Limiting chocolates, lollies, sweets and desserts

Listen to you hunger cues and only have a snack if you are actually hungry

Watch your serve sizes, especially of foods like rice, pasta, potato and meat

Healthy Weight Gain during Pregnancy
Now is a good time to consider your eating habits as your needs for many nutrients increase during pregnancy, to ensure healthy growth of the baby.

PREGNANCY IS NOT A TIME FOR STRICT DIETING.

However, keeping high fat high calorie foods to a minimum will help to restrict weight gain to a healthy amount during pregnancy.

It is important to eat well during pregnancy. Keeping track of your weight during pregnancy is also important for your’s and your baby’s health.

Women who are overweight or gain too much weight during pregnancy have a higher risk of:
- High blood pressure
- Gestational diabetes (diabetes during pregnancy)
- A large baby
- Caesarean sections
- Birth defects
- Difficulty losing weight after your baby is born. This can increase your long term risk of diabetes, heart disease and some cancers.

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Being active during pregnancy

Regular exercise is important for weight control and general health during pregnancy.

As long as your pregnancy is uncomplicated, activities such as walking, swimming and bike riding are all acceptable, but it is important to check with your Doctor or physiotherapist first, before increasing your level of exercise during pregnancy.

Which kind of activity is best?

Choose a form of exercise that you enjoy – you will be more likely to stick to it!

Choose exercise that fits into your daily routine and can be sustained.

Keep up ‘background activity’ – use the stairs, walk or ride rather than drive.

Start slowly and build up fitness gradually

If possible, find someone to exercise with – it will increase your motivation when you don’t feel like it. Or get involved in social activities such as tennis or golf!

How much is enough?

To get the most health benefits, a good goal is at least half an hour of moderate-intensity physical activity on most, preferably, all days. You do not have to do it all at once. Your exercise can be spread over the day, in ten minute blocks. Try three ten minute walks, or two fifteen-minute periods of activity.

What DOES moderate-intensity activity MEAN?

Moderate-intensity means you are exercising at a comfortable pace. A good guideline is the “talk test” - you should be able to easily hold a conversation without being short of breath.

What are some activities that I can do?

Many activities are safe during pregnancy including:

- Swimming
- Walking
- Cycling on an exercise bike
- Yoga or Pilates
- Low-impact aerobics, like water aerobics
- Light resistance gym program

Classes that specially cater to pregnant women may be more suited to your needs and body changes during your pregnancy. They can adapt exercises for you, such as having you lie on your side as you exercise rather than on your back, which is not advised throughout your pregnancy.

Remember that incidental activity counts too! This is physical activity that builds up as part of everyday activities. Try to:

- Use the stairs instead of the lift
- Park your car further away from the shops for extra steps
- Get off the train or bus one stop early and walk home
- Be active around the house or garden

Most activities are safe, as long as you:

- take things easy
- stop when you are tired
- drink plenty of water
- wear suitable clothing
- do not become overheated
- stop the activity if you experience any pain that doesn’t settle quickly

Avoid:

- excessive stretching. Your ligaments can be softened by the hormonal changes during pregnancy. Be careful with side kicks in aqua-aerobics and swimming breaststroke.
- high impact activities or contact sports. These include running, surfing, water skiing, trampolining, gymnastics, netball, touch football or squash.
- activities that may limit your oxygen supply. Two examples are scuba diving and mountain climbing.

How can I keep motivated?

- Plan to do an exercise class each week or to walk with a friend
- Do exercises that you enjoy
- Remind yourself of how good you feel when you do and after you are active.

Remember the benefits of being active during pregnancy.

Benefits include:

- less lower back pain
- less nausea
- less heartburn
- lower stress levels
- more energy
- better bowel habits
- better sleep
- being more relaxed
- less anxiety
- a lower risk of diabetes and heart disease
- quicker return to normal after child birth

Returning to your pre-pregnancy weight.

The greatest amount of weight loss occurs in the first 3 months after birth and then continues at a slow and steady rate until 6 months after birth. Breastfeeding helps you return to your pre-pregnancy weight as some of the weight you gain during pregnancy is used as fuel to make breast milk. Healthy eating and regular physical activity in the postnatal period will also help you to lose the weight gained during pregnancy.

Future pregnancies

If you are planning another pregnancy, it is a good idea to return to your pre-pregnancy weight first, or close to this. Starting your pregnancy at a BMI above the healthy weight range puts you and your baby at greater health risks during pregnancy and retaining excess weight over subsequent pregnancies increases your risk of lifestyle diseases. Speak to your Dietitian for more advice.

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Content in this handout was informed by:


Physical Activity - Information provided is consistent with current Active Australia guidelines for physical activity and Sports Medicine Australia – Exercise in Pregnancy
Fats

You need only a small amount of fat in your diet to cover your nutrients needs.

Fat is found in many foods. Whether it comes in a solid form (margarine, butter, lard), or as a liquid (e.g. oil) it is still a concentrated form of energy. Reducing your intake of fat will definitely help your weight control.

DAIRY PRODUCTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2 serves daily</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 serve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= 250ml milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= 40g (2 slices) low fat cheese</td>
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<tr>
<td>= 200g (1 tub) yoghurt</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Dairy foods are our best natural dietary source of calcium, and low fat cheese (eg. reduced fat cheddars), light, trim & skim milk, low fat yoghurts give as much calcium as the full fat varieties without the fat.

VEGETABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5 serves daily</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 serve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= ½ cup cooked vegetables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= 1 potato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= 1 cup salad</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

These are also high in vitamins, minerals and fibre, essential for a healthy pregnancy.

Don’t add fat/butter or creamy sauces to naturally low kilojoule vegetables!

Veggies are a great filler, so pile your plate high, and snack on them freely during the day.

Addavour with:
- Chili sauce
- Pepper
- Lemon juice
- Tabasco
- Herbs (eg parsley, mint)

SUGARS

Sugar provides kilojoules (energy) without any nutrients.

For example:

- 11 strawberries = 160 kilojoules (KJ) + fibre, vitamins and minerals
- 2 level teaspoons sugar = 160 KJ + NOTHING!

Eating too many foods containing sugar contributes to becoming overweight.

High sugar foods include:
- Sugar (white, brown, raw)
- Jam, marmalade
- Honey, golden syrup, treacle, corn syrup
- Monosaccharides, disaccharides
- Dextrrose, maltose
- Sorbitol, mannitol, xylitol
- Chocolate, lollies, cough lollies
- Biscuits, cakes
- Sugar coated cereals
- Jelly, soft drinks
- Cordials, flavoured milks
- Condensed milk
- Ice cream

FRUITS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 serves daily</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 serve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= 1 medium piece, eg. apple, orange, pear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= 2 small pieces, eg. apricots, kiwi fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= 1 cup diced/canned fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= dried fruit eg. 1 ½ tbsp sultanas</td>
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</table>

Fresh fruit is high in vitamins, minerals & fibre.

FRUIT juices are a concentrated form of fruit with no fibre so are best avoided. One small glass can contain the juice of up to 4-5 pieces of fruit. Try diluting these with water or soda water.

Canned fruits are a great dessert (especially topped with plain, low fat yoghurt or low joule jelly) but choose the ones canned in natural juices or water, rather than the ones in heavy sugar-laden syrups.

ALCOHOL

It is best to avoid alcohol during pregnancy. This is because alcohol is carried across the placenta into the baby’s bloodstream. Unborn babies cannot effectively break down alcohol and may be at risk of abnormalities, particularly in the first 3 months of pregnancy.

It is especially important to avoid alcohol if you are trying to restrict your weight gain during pregnancy, as this provides calories with little nutrition. Drinking alcohol can also reduce your resolve to keep away from high fat/sugar foods.
SNACKS

There may be times when you will need a snack to tide you over until the next meal...

TRY:

- wholemeal/wholegrain crackers or crispbreads
- salads & vegetables (eg. carrot, celery)
- low fat milk or yoghurt
- fresh fruit
- soda water / unflavoured mineral water
- clear soup, broths (fat skimmed off)

COMBINATION OF THE ABOVE, eg:

- Non fat yoghurt and raw vegetables to dip
- Crackers, low fat cheese and tomato
- Fruit smoothie: using skim milk and one piece of fruit – blended

Handy hints for the supermarket

1. Never shop on an empty stomach.
2. Write a shopping list: this will help you withstand the temptation to buy unsuitable foods.
3. Choose less processed foods as these are generally lower in fat & sugar, and high in fibre (and cheaper too!!!) eg. Rolled oats instead of coco pops Low fat yoghurt or milk instead of ice cream or flavoured milk.
4. Avoid buying tempting snack foods eg chips & lollies. When they are not in the house, you can’t eat them!!

Shopping – label reading

Learn to read labels COMPARING labels & choose foods low in FAT and SUGARS, and high in FIBRE.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serving size – 30g (1/2 cup)</th>
<th>Per 30g</th>
<th>per 100g</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENERGY</td>
<td>443kj</td>
<td>1478kj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROTEIN</td>
<td>3.9g</td>
<td>13.1g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAT</td>
<td>0.7g</td>
<td>2.2g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARBOHYDRATE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- TOTAL</td>
<td>22.0g</td>
<td>73.4g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- SUGARS</td>
<td>4.1g</td>
<td>13.5g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIETARY FIBRE</td>
<td>8.6g</td>
<td>28.7g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SODIUM</td>
<td>292mg</td>
<td>973mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POTASSIUM</td>
<td>247mg</td>
<td>822mg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INGREDIENTS: WHEAT BRAN, SUGAR, MALT EXTRACT, SALT, CASTER SUGAR, VITAMINS (THIAMIN, RIBOFLAVIN), MINERAL (IRON)

Useful information includes:

SERVING SIZE: this is the average serving size of the product, but this may not be the same as the serving you have. Weigh your normal serve and work out the amount of nutrients you are consuming using the figures per 100g.

PER 100G: 100g is a useful standard to compare products, eg which is lower in fat. Use this information when choosing products.

FAT: Use the figure per 100g and pick the product with the least fat. Generally, look for products with less than 10g fat per 100g.

CARBOHYDRATE:

TOTAL: this includes both sugars and starches, use this figure to work out how much carbohydrate you are eating.

SUGARS: this tells you how much of the total carbohydrate is sugar, again, look for products with less than 15g per 100g.

DIETARY FIBRE: Use the figure per 100g and choose the product which is higher in fibre. 25-30g is the recommended daily intake for dietary fibre.

INGREDIENTS LIST: this lists the ingredients contained in the product in order of quantity, from most to least. Useful for identifying sources of added fat, sugars and salt.

Suggested Meal Plan

**Breakfast**

- Breakfast cereal with low fat milk
- Wholemeal bread/toast with scraping margarine/butter
- Vegemite, jam or honey
- Glass of milk or water

**Lunch**

- Wholemeal bread/roll/pita/wrap or rice cakes
- Lean meat, chicken, fish, egg or low fat cheese
- Salad
- Water, milk or juice

**Dinner**

- Lean meat, chicken, fish or legume (beans/lentils) dish
- Vegetables or salad
- Boiled potato, rice or pasta
- Fruit or low-fat milk based dessert

**Between meals**

- Fresh fruit
- Low fat yoghurt
- Dried fruit
- Slice of bread or low fat crackers if hungry

For Further information please contact the dietitian, Women’s and Children’s Allied Health Dept. Townsville Hospital. ph: 4433 2152