

The Top Ten Pregnancy Nutrition Tips

By having a healthy diet, you can give your baby the best start that you can, and you will also reap the health benefits. Women who have well-balanced diets during pregnancy are far more likely to return to their pre-pregnancy weight in a shorter period of time than those who eat foods that are high in fat and sugar. As well, the healthy eaters are less likely to develop hypertension or diabetes during pregnancy.

A wide variety of foods can be utilized to create a healthy diet for you and your baby. This should be the time to celebrate your body by eating a wide range of foods, and not the time to be dieting or obsessing about weight gain. However, remember that eating for two doesn't mean eating twice as much. The average pregnant woman only requires about an extra 300 calories per day.

Here are the top ten pregnancy nutrition tips that will help you help you through these miraculous nine months.

1. Eat Your Grains

Complex carbohydrates such as bread, pasta, rice, and cereal are a great source of energy, vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Remember that it's always better to select whole-grain products, such as whole-wheat bread, brown rice, and oatmeal.

2. Focus On Folic Acid and Iron

Both folic acid and iron are essential for your body to produce the extra blood that your body requires during pregnancy. As well, folic acid is also especially important in the early weeks of pregnancy to prevent the risk of neural tube and congenital heart defects. Iron and folic acid can be found in a wide range of different foods including: dried fruits, beans, whole grains, dark leafy greens, certain meats, and citrus fruits.

3. Fill Up on Fruits and Vegetables

When planning your meals, choose a wide array of fruits and vegetables. They will provide you with vitamins A and C and minerals such as iron and magnesium. Don't forget to rinse fruits and vegetables carefully before consuming, to remove any traces of pesticides, or consider selecting organic produce.

4. Enjoy Dairy Products In Moderation

Milk, yogurt, cheese, and even ice cream are great sources of protein, calcium, phosphorus, and vitamins. Calcium is vital during pregnancy and breastfeeding. Choose low or non-fat items as often as you can.

5. Drink Lots of Water

Don't underestimate the importance of drinking water throughout your pregnancy. Water is important for building new tissue, carrying nutrients and waste products within your body, helping digestion, and forming amniotic fluid around your baby. Try to drink at least eight glasses of water each day. Keeping hydrated will also help prevent those painful leg and foot cramps that are extremely common during pregnancy.

5. Try a Mocktail Instead of a Cocktail

For those women who enjoy an occasional glass of wine or cocktail, abstaining from alcohol during pregnancy can be challenging. Instead of envying others alcoholic drinks, try concocting blended fruit juices with fresh fruit for a refreshing and healthy alternative.

6. Avoid These Foods

Some foods are better off avoided throughout pregnancy because of the possibility of health risks to your baby. These foods are sushi, cold lunchmeats, raw eggs, raw meats or shellfish, and unpasteurized milk or cheese.

7. Snack To Prevent Morning Sickness

For some women, nausea and vomiting is an unfortunate aspect of pregnancy. While it cannot be completely avoided, there are ways to minimize these uncomfortable symptoms. Eating frequent meals that include both protein and carbohydrates is a way to keep that queasy feeling at bay. Morning sickness is most likely to strike when you have an empty stomach. Chewing gum or popping a mint in your mouth may also help. As ginger has been long known to prevent nausea, try sipping ginger tea.

8. Minimize Heartburn

Heartburn is another not so pleasant part of pregnancy. Pregnancy hormones are the main cause of this unpleasant condition. As well, as your uterus grows, it will press against your stomach and add to this problem. To prevent and relieve heartburn, eat six small meals instead of three big ones, eat slowly, chew your food well, and don't eat or drink within a few hours of bedtime. As well, prop a few pillows under your shoulders in bed, and if the

symptoms are too uncomfortable, ask your midwife or doctor about using antacids.

9. Consider Prenatal Vitamins

While a well-rounded diet should supply almost all of the nutrients that you will need during a pregnancy, you may be prescribed prenatal vitamins or mineral supplements. Remember not to take anything without the advice of your midwife or doctor

10. Splurge Occasionally

Finally, dont forget to splurge occasionally on something that you love to eat. Pregnancy is a time for celebration. Its ok to have an occasional bowl of ice cream, slice of cake, or hamburger. Enjoy!

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