

Happy Healthy Bump



The Healthy Families Team
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Early Pregnancy Nutrition

Foods to choose

- Eating healthily in pregnancy does not mean going on a special diet and there is no need to eat for two. Eating from the food groups below in three meals and 2-3 snacks per day will provide the nutrients your baby and you need.
- Overnight, try not to leave it longer than 12 hours between eating. If you do not usually eat breakfast try a small snack to get your day started.



Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta, other starchy carbohydrates (e.g. cereals, yam, chapattis)

- try to include at every meal (and make the main part of the meal)
- choose wholegrain or higher fibre options with less added fat, salt and sugar
- these give you and your growing baby energy and help to stop you feeling sick.

Fruit and vegetables

- try to eat 5 a day – fresh, frozen, tinned, dried and juiced all count
- these are good for you and your baby as they are full of vitamins, minerals and fibre.



Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins (e.g. nuts, quorn, tofu)



- eat two portions of these a day and oily fish 1-2 times per week
- one portion = two eggs OR three tablespoons of pulses OR hand (palm) size of meat or fish
- these are good for your baby's overall growth and are a good source of iron (which helps a baby's brain develop).

Dairy and alternatives

- try to have three portions a day. One portion = one glass milk (200ml) OR 150g pot of yoghurt OR 30g cheese
- choose low-fat versions unless you are underweight
- these are a good source of calcium (if you eat soya alternatives check that calcium has been added)
- other non-dairy foods that have some calcium include: tahini, spinach, broccoli, tofu, beans, dahl, sardines, almonds, dried fruit
- calcium helps build teeth and bones for your baby and looks after yours too.



Oil and spreads

- try to keep to small amounts
- choose unsaturated oils and low-fat spreads
- minimise eating food and drinks high in fats and sugars (e.g. cakes, biscuits, sweets, crisps) to avoid putting on too much weight during pregnancy.



Fluids (water, skimmed or semi-skimmed milk, fresh fruit juice)

- have about eight glasses a day (however if you do drink fresh fruit juice, keep this to one glass of your eight for the day)
- drink more if you're being sick or if you're doing exercise
- your baby is living in a watery world inside you – keep that fluid topped up.





Foods to avoid



Food group to avoid	Specific foods to avoid	Why?
Cheese, milk and other dairy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mold-ripened soft cheeses with a white coating on the outside, such as brie, camembert and chevre (unless cooked until steaming hot).• Soft blue cheeses such as Danish blue, Gorgonzola and Roquefort (unless cooked until steaming hot).• Any unpasteurised cow's milk, goats' milk or sheep's milk• Any foods made from unpasteurised milk, such as soft goats' cheese.	<p>Unpasteurised dairy products may contain listeria. This bacteria can causes an infection called listeriosis. There's a small chance listeriosis can lead to miscarriage, stillbirth, or make your newborn baby very unwell.</p> <p>Soft cheeses with a white coating on the outside have more moisture. This can make it easier for bacteria to grow.</p>
Meat and poultry	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raw or undercooked meat• Liver and liver products.• All types of pâté, including vegetarian pâté (as this contains raw eggs).• Game meats such as goose, partridge or pheasant.	<p>There's a small risk of getting toxoplasmosis if you eat raw and undercooked meat, which can cause miscarriage. Liver and liver products have lots of vitamin A in them. This can be harmful to an unborn baby.</p> <p>Game meats may contain lead shot.</p>

Food	Specific foods to avoid	Why?
Eggs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raw or partially cooked eggs that are not British Lion. Duck, goose or quail eggs, unless cooked thoroughly until the whites and yolks are solid. 	<p>Try to eat British Lion eggs (eggs with a lion stamp on them) because they are less likely to have salmonella in them; which can lead to food poisoning. If you eat eggs that are not British Lion, or not from hens, make sure the whites and yolks are cooked thoroughly.</p>
Fish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You should eat no more than 2 portions of oily fish a week, such as salmon, trout, mackerel or herring. You should eat no more than 2 tuna steaks (about 140g cooked or 170g raw) or 4 medium-size cans of tuna (about 140g when drained) per week. Avoid raw shellfish completely. 	<p>You should limit tuna and completely avoid swordfish, marlin and shark because it has more mercury in it than other fish. If you eat too much mercury, it can be harmful to your unborn baby. You should limit oily fish because they can have pollutants such as dioxins and polychlorinated biphenyls in them. If you eat too much of these, they can be harmful to your unborn baby. You should avoid raw shellfish because they can have harmful bacteria, viruses or toxins in them. These can make you unwell and give you food poisoning.</p>
Drinks	<p>Caffeine – you can have caffeine but should have no more than 200mg per day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 140mg in a mug of filter coffee 75mg in a mug of tea <p>Alcohol - If you're pregnant or planning to get pregnant, the safest approach is to not drink alcohol at all.</p> <p>Herbal teas - You should drink no more than 4 cups of herbal tea a day.</p>	<p>Drinking alcohol in pregnancy can lead to long-term harm to your baby.</p>
<p>If you need to avoid other foods/drinks that are not on the list due to medical reasons, please contact your GP or a Dietitian</p>		

The importance of Iron

Iron is a mineral that has many different roles in the body. Iron is particularly important for making haemoglobin: a protein contained in red blood cells that transports oxygen around the body.

Which foods are good sources of iron?

Many different foods contain iron in different amounts. Some food sources are more iron rich than others. For example, animal-based sources such as red meat (beef, lamb and pork) are particularly rich sources of iron and are most easily absorbed, compared to other protein sources such as fish and poultry. Vegetables such as broccoli and spinach, dried fruits such as apricots and dates, nuts such as almonds, brazil and hazelnuts are all high in iron.



What about plant-based iron sources?

Plant-based sources of iron include pulses and legumes (such as beans, peas and lentils), dark green leafy vegetables (such as spinach, cabbage and broccoli), tofu, nuts and seeds. Food preparation can also enhance iron absorption. For example, cooking, soaking nuts and seeds and using sprouted seeds and grains. Try and opt for the more iron-rich plant-based foods such as baked beans, canned butter beans, chickpeas (boiled), canned kidney beans, tofu (steamed).

What are the symptoms of iron deficiency?

People with mild iron deficiency often feel tired, lacking in energy and tend to be more susceptible to infections. With more severe iron deficiency (called iron deficiency anaemia) symptoms such as heart palpitations, brittle nails, thinning hair, itchy skin and mouth sores or ulcers can develop.



Getting enough Iron?

Group	Age (years)	Iron (mg) per day
Infants	0-3 months	1.7
	4-6 months	4.3
	7-12 months	7.8
Children	1-3 years	6.9
	4-6 years	6.1
	7-10 years	8.7
Adolescents	11-18 years	14.8 (girls)
		11.3 (boys)
Adults	19 – 50 years	8.7 (males)
	19 – 50 years	14.8 (females)
	50+ years	8.7

What foods are high in iron?

Type of Food	Iron per 100g
Beef (rump steak)	3.6mg
Beef mince (stewed)	2.7mg
Eggs (fried)	2.2mg
Prawns (boiled)	1.1mg
Tuna (canned in brine)	1.0mg
Mackerel (grilled)	0.8mg
Salmon (steamed)	0.4mg
Baked beans	1.4mg
Chickpeas (boiled)	2mg
Kidney beans (canned)	2mg
Tofu (steamed)	1.2mg



Type of Food	Iron per 100g
Figs (partially dried)	3.9mg
Apricots (partially dried)	3.4mg
Dates (dried)	1.3mg
Almonds	3mg
Brazil nuts	2.5mg
Peanut butter (smooth)	2.1mg
Hazelnuts	3.2mg
Sesame seeds	10.4mg
Sunflower seeds	6.4mg
Broccoli (boiled)	1mg
Spinach (boiled)	1.6mg

Iodine

What is Iodine?

Iodine is a mineral that is important for health. It is a key part of the thyroid hormones that are needed for many body processes including growth, metabolism and for the development of a baby's brain during pregnancy and early life. A number of studies have shown iodine deficiency in pregnant women. Adults require 150 micrograms (mcg) per day; which increases to 200 mcg when pregnant or breastfeeding.

Iodine deficiency

A low intake of iodine over a long period of time will cause your thyroid to work harder to keep the right amount of thyroid hormones in your blood. If you have an iodine deficiency during pregnancy, there may be effects on the baby's brain development which could lead to problems such as lower IQ or reading ability in later life.



During pregnancy, the amount of iodine you need increases in order to make enough thyroid hormones to transfer to your baby to help its brain develop correctly. You will also need a higher amount of iodine whilst breastfeeding, so that your breast milk contains enough iodine for your baby whose brain is still developing.

Where is Iodine found in the diet?

Iodine is found in a range of foods, the richest sources being fish, milk, and dairy products. In general, white fish contains more iodine than oily fish. Milk and dairy products are the main sources of iodine for most people. It is important to be aware that most milk-alternative drinks (e.g. soya/almond/oat) are not fortified with iodine and have a low iodine content. Some milk-alternative drinks are fortified with iodine so it is important to check the product label.



Check for
fortification

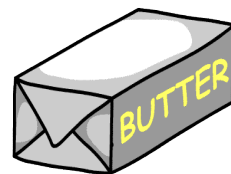


Supplements



Vitamin D

This vitamin is particularly important for the growth and development of your baby's bones and helps to maintain the health of your bones too. Your skin produces Vitamin D when it is exposed to sunlight, but the sun in the UK is only strong enough in the summer months (April to mid-October). You can also get Vitamin D from food but food sources are limited; sources include oily fish, fat spreads and eggs. Most people should be able to get all the Vitamin D they need by eating a healthy balanced diet and by getting some summer sun.



However, many women of childbearing age have low Vitamin D status, particularly in winter months. As a pregnant or breastfeeding woman, you are at risk of not getting enough Vitamin D, particularly if you are not exposed to much sunlight or you have darker skin (e.g. you are of African, African-Caribbean or South Asian origin) as your skin will not produce as much Vitamin D from sunlight. It is advised that to make sure you get enough Vitamin D all year round, all pregnant women should take a daily supplement containing 10 mcg. This will also help to provide your baby with enough Vitamin D.



Under the Healthy Start scheme, you may be able to get vitamins for your baby after they are born. You can find out more from www.healthystart.nhs.uk

Folic Acid



Folic acid is a B vitamin which is vital for the formation of red blood cells. The form of folic acid occurring naturally in food is called 'folate'. A deficiency of folic acid can reduce the ability of red blood cells to carry oxygen, this is called 'macrocytic' (large cell) anaemia.

Folate is found naturally in a wide variety of foods, such as leafy green vegetables, beans and legumes, oranges and orange juice and fortified breads and cereals.



As folic acid is a water-soluble vitamin (dissolves easily in water), it is lost from vegetables during cooking. This can be reduced by avoiding over-cooking, and steaming or microwaving vegetables instead of boiling.



The foetus rapidly develops spine and nerve cells in the first few weeks of pregnancy. Inadequate blood levels of folate at this crucial time increase the risk of the baby's spine developing a 'neural tube defect', resulting in spinal malformation called spina bifida.

- Adults and children over 11 years: 200 micrograms
- Anyone considering pregnancy: 200 micrograms plus a supplement containing 400 micrograms
- Pregnant people: 300 micrograms plus a 400 microgram supplement during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.

Weight gain and “eating for two”

Eating healthily in pregnancy does not mean going on a special diet and there is no need to eat for two.

How much weight should I be gaining over the whole pregnancy?



Follow the one, two, three rule. Overweight pregnant women should gain about one stone (6kg), normal weight women should gain about two stone (12kg) and underweight pregnant women should gain about three stone (19kg). You should not try to lose weight while you are pregnant, but it is also important you do not gain too much weight.

Gaining too much weight can increase your risk of complications. These include:

- **Gestational diabetes:** too much glucose (sugar) in your blood during pregnancy can cause gestational diabetes, which increases your risk of having a large baby and temporary health complications after birth.
- **Pre-eclampsia:** a rise in blood pressure can be the first sign of pre-eclampsia; although most cases are mild and cause no trouble, it can be serious.

If you're concerned about your weight or any other aspect of your health while pregnant, ask your midwife or GP for advice.