



The Ultimate Pregnancy

DIET & NUTRITION GUIDE

With Delicious Recipes You Will Love

BY SARAH J. TAYLOR

The Ultimate Pregnancy Diet & Nutrition Guide

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By Sarah J. Taylor

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Introduction

For the next nine months, you'll be in for a wild ride. From the changes in your body to your lifestyle, pregnancy brings a tsunami of changes you need to make to ensure that you and your baby are healthy. A major part of pregnancy to keep your eye on is your physical health, especially in the nutrition department.

Pregnancy nutrition is unique. Whether you've had a healthy, so-so, or not-so-great diet before pregnancy, you'll be making significant changes in your diet and lifestyle. In this e-book, we'll go over the basics of nutrition for pregnant women and how you can stay on top of your health during and after pregnancy. Get ready to transform your health to benefit your role as a mother and for your baby! Let's begin!

Chapter 1: Pregnancy Nutrition Basics

The most common myth about pregnancy is that soon-to-be moms have to eat for two. In a way, yes, you're eating for two when you're pregnant, but it's not related to the amount of food you consume. It's related to the nutrition you're giving your body. The nutrients extracted from the food you eat also goes to your baby, and that's the true meaning of eating for two.

What to Avoid During Pregnancy

To start off the basics of pregnancy nutrition, let's go over what you should avoid consuming during your pregnancy. With this information, you'll have an easier time making healthier diet choices for you and your baby.

- **Seafood** – Although most pregnant women avoid seafood overall, it doesn't mean that you can't eat it. What you need to avoid consuming are seafood high in mercury levels, such as shark, King mackerel, and swordfish. But pregnant women can consume seafood with very low mercury levels, such as shrimp, salmon, and tuna. It's recommended that you limit your seafood intake to 8-12 ounces per week. Also, be wary of canned fish as the mercury levels can vary for each can, despite the fish being a safe-to-eat one. You should avoid eating raw seafood as well.
- **Undercooked meat and deli meat** – When you're pregnant, you're at higher risk of serious food poisoning conditions, such as listeriosis. It's best to cook your meals at home to prevent food

poisoning. Also, make sure that all your meat has been cooked thoroughly, such as hot dogs and chicken. Use a food thermometer to ensure that your meat has been cooked through.

- **Unpasteurized food products** – Foods that haven't been pasteurized can cause illnesses, so avoid these foods. Make sure you check labels for 'pasteurized' when you're grocery shopping, especially in the dairy and juice departments.
- **Undercooked or raw eggs** – Before eating eggs, make sure the yolk and whites are completely cooked and firm. Don't consume raw eggs or undercooked eggs since they can cause food poisoning.
- **Herbal tea** – Though herbal teas for pregnant women exist in the market, it doesn't mean that it's good for you. Herbal teas can be harmful, so talk to your doctor before you drink any tea.
- **Caffeine** – Sorry, coffee and soda lovers! Caffeine can affect your baby's development and heart rate negatively and even lead to miscarriages. You can limit your amount of caffeine intake to 200 milligrams or less per day. If you're a coffee drinker, that's about 2 cups of coffee (eight ounces for each cup) a day.
- **Alcohol** – No amount of alcohol is safe for a baby's development, so avoid alcohol in your diet completely. Excess alcohol consumption can lead to fetal alcohol syndrome, and this can cause mental problems and facial deformations for your baby. The wine will have to take a break for a while when you're pregnant!

Best Foods to Eat During Pregnancy

Many pregnant women believe that their diet is restricted during pregnancy, but that's not the case at all. You still have a wide range of delicious food to choose from when you're pregnant; you just need to be more careful about what you consume. Though your diet isn't very strict during pregnancy, there are foods that do wonders for your health during this time.

- **Folate-rich foods** – Also known as vitamin B9, folate is a must-have nutrient for all pregnant women. You can take supplements as long as your doctor allows, but you can also find folate in foods, too. Spinach, asparagus, black-eyed peas, oranges, romaine lettuce, and healthy cereal are just a handful of foods that contain folate.
- **Calcium-loaded foods or beverages** – When you're pregnant, your body is using up a lot more calcium than normal. Fill up on calcium by drinking pasteurized milk or eating dark, leafy greens.
- **Bananas** – Bananas are known to be rich in potassium, and they provide energy to combat fatigue during pregnancy. Bananas can help calm nausea, too.
- **Lean meat** – Stay energized by getting enough iron in your diet with lean meats. Without enough iron, you'll get tired more easily. Your body is going through a lot of changes right now, so it's important for you to get as much energy as you can.

- **Eggs** – Earlier, we mentioned that undercooked or raw eggs shouldn't be consumed, but that doesn't mean eggs are bad for you. Many women turn to eggs for their protein source instead of meat, and you can, too. Eggs provide all the amino acids your body needs to stay healthy and balanced.
- **Oatmeal** – Oatmeal is a superfood that every pregnant woman should include in her diet. Not the sugary, already-flavored kind, either. Plain oatmeal is the best one to eat, and it doesn't have to be boring. You can make baked oatmeal with nuts, dried fruits, and almond milk, or you can mix in jelly, fruits, honey or other flavors into the oatmeal to make it less bland. Oatmeal is a great complex carbohydrate, and it helps you stay full for longer and give you tons of energy.
- **Nuts and seeds** – Raw nuts and seeds are fantastic sources of protein and healthy fats that will do good to your health and your baby's health. But avoid nuts and seeds are known as high-allergen foods, such as peanuts. Your baby can develop allergies later on in childhood if these high-allergen foods are consumed a lot.
- **Beans** – Beans are a nutrient powerhouse, containing protein, fiber, and a lot of other nutrients to help you have a healthy pregnancy. Beans can also help relieve constipation, which many pregnant women experience. They also have a lot of protein, and pregnant women need to up their protein intake during these nine months.

Vitamins and Minerals Pregnant Women Need

During pregnancy, your nutrient needs increase. Noted nutrients that will help you have a successful, healthy pregnancy include the following:

- Folate
- Calcium
- Vitamin D
- Protein
- Iron
- DHA (an omega-3 fatty acid)

These vitamins and minerals help maintain balance in your body. Since your body demands more nutrients during pregnancy, you'll need to make sure you get the right amounts of nutrients every day. Though you can get these nutrients from supplements by doctor's recommendation, you can also get them naturally from foods.

Basic Nutrition Guidelines for Pregnant Women

Nutrition guidelines vary from person to person, depending on your age, height, weight, dietary preferences, etc. But what will be outlined here are basic guidelines you should follow as a pregnant woman. This is a great way to see if you're getting what you need each day, so use this as a guide and talk to your doctor for any specific dietary limitations and guidelines.

- Calcium – 1,000 milligrams per day
 - Soy milk
 - Pasteurized milk

- Yogurt
- Cottage cheese
- Almonds
- Tofu
- Cabbage

- DHA – 300 milligrams per day
 - Salmon
 - Tuna
 - Fortified eggs
 - Sardines
 - Anchovies

- Folate/Folic Acid – 600-800 micrograms per day
 - Spinach
 - Cabbage
 - Collard greens
 - Oranges
 - Melons
 - Strawberries
 - Whole-grain bread
 - Oatmeal

- Vitamin C – at least 85 milligrams per day

- Oranges
- Dark, leafy greens e.g., spinach, kale
- Mangoes
- Sweet peppers

- Protein – 75-100 grams per day
 - Lean meats
 - Beans
 - Lentils
 - Milk
 - Nuts
 - Fish

- Iron – 27-45 milligrams per day
 - Whole-grain cereal
 - Lean red meats
 - White-meat chicken
 - Dried apricots
 - Potatoes
 - Broccoli

- Potassium – 4,700 milligrams per day
 - Bananas
 - White beans
 - Squash
 - Sweet potatoes

- Lentils
- Raisins
- Yogurt

These food items focus on the vitamins and minerals you should be consuming daily while you're pregnant. Now, let's go over the daily servings you need for the main food groups while you're pregnant:

- Vegetables = 3-5 servings
- Fruits = 2-4 servings
- Meats/Protein = 3-4 servings
- Dairy = 4-6 servings
- Grains = 6-11 servings

You can use either of these guidelines to create your meal plans for the week during your pregnancy. To give you an even better idea of how to plan your meals, here's a sample meal plan for the average pregnant woman:

	<u>Breakfast</u>	<u>Lunch</u>	<u>Dinner</u>

<u>Monday</u>	Banana-Strawberry-Spinach Smoothie and vegetable omelet	Vegetable and bean soup with whole-grain crackers or biscuits	Grilled chicken salad with homemade dressing and toasted whole-grain bread
<u>Tuesday</u>	Fruit and nuts oatmeal 1 cup of whole or skim milk	Chef salad Whole-grain roll	Baked halibut with vegetables Bean soup
<u>Wednesday</u>	Whole-grain waffles with peanut butter Fruit salad 1 cup of soy milk	Chicken burger with whole-grain buns	Small baked potato Turkey and cheese sandwich
<u>Thursday</u>	Whole-grain cereal with skim milk 2 hard-boiled eggs or scrambled egg whites	Turkey chili with vegetables and beans Multi-grain rolls	Shrimp salad with lentils Whole-grain rolls
<u>Friday</u>	Whole-grain banana pancakes 1 cup of milk or juice	Steak or chicken fajitas	Spaghetti and turkey meatballs with homeade tomato sauce

Snacks should also be part of your pregnancy diet, and here are a few snack ideas you can include:

- Carrots with homemade hummus
- Fruit salad
- Yogurt with granola
- Whole-grain banana and almond or walnut muffin

- Apple slices with peanut butter

Pregnancy Diet Tips

To make it easier for you to plan your meals and manage your diet while you're pregnant, here are a few tips for you:

1. Start taking prenatal vitamins. Jumpstart your pregnancy health with prenatal vitamins. You can find these in supplements, so ask your doctor if it's safe for you to take prenatal supplements. Supplements will help you get the nutrients you need. But don't rely solely on supplements; your diet should also be healthy and provide you with the nutrients you need.

Also, taking prenatal vitamins can help reduce the risk of common health conditions for babies, such as spina bifida. Since most pregnant women lack folic acid and vitamin D, prenatal vitamins will help you get the nutrients you need.

2. Eat 6-8 small meals per day. These meals aren't the typical ones; they're smaller and more frequent. Think of them as appetizer meals. By eating smaller meals, you may have an easier time digesting and manage your diet better. As your baby grows and takes up more space in your body, bigger meals may not go down so well. This would be a good time to start getting into the habit of eating 6-8 small meals per day.

3. Control your cravings. Your hormones will be going wild during your pregnancy, and odd cravings can kick in at any time of the day. But for many pregnant women, these cravings have bad side effects, such as

excessive weight gain and constipation, which can harm you and even your baby. You don't have to give into your cravings all the time. When you get craving pangs, you can control them and not indulge in them. For instance, one way to combat cravings indirectly are to prepare healthy, satisfying snacks ahead of time. When you get a craving, snack on these healthy foods instead.

4. Switch ingredients in recipes to healthier ones. You can also avoid going straight to unhealthy foods and create healthier alternative for your favorite foods. For instance, if you're craving pizza, you can make one by using a whole-grain English muffin, homemade tomato sauce, shredded cheese, chopped bell pepper, and spinach. If you're having unhealthy cravings, find ways for you to make them healthier.

Chapter 2: Pregnancy Weight Management

Weight is one of the biggest, most common problems that women battle with during pregnancy. In most cases, though, it's all about mindset. For example: If you've battled with weight before pregnancy, you may feel like you're struggling with weight when you do get pregnant.

But the truth? You're going to gain weight during pregnancy. A baby is growing inside you, and that baby is going to keep growing and growing. You'll see the scale go up over time during your trimesters, and it can't be avoided. It's a pregnancy truism.

However, that doesn't mean you're doomed. You're having a baby! Have fun, be happy, and enjoy these nine months. Focus on the positive aspects of pregnancy. You'll always be able to lose baby weight after you've given birth. Your body's bound to change during pregnancy, so there's not much you can do about it, except know how to manage your weight during pregnancy.

Most women believe the “eat for two” pregnancy myth and go wild with eating. But that only results in excessive weight gain, which you don't want. On average, pregnant women gain 25-35 pounds during pregnancy. But remember that your baby is part of that weight, so don't think that it's all fat. Many expectant mothers lead active lifestyles to manage their weight and health, and you can, too.

One thing you need to note is that you may have to increase your calorie intake while you're pregnant – about 300-500 calories per day. Depending on your starting weight before pregnancy, your daily calorie intake may change. Talk to your doctor if you're unsure about your calorie intake during your pregnancy.

For weight management, it can be done in four simple steps:

1. Eat a balanced, nutritious diet that has been adapted to your pregnancy needs, and plan out all your meals and snacks.
2. Avoid indulging in unhealthy cravings. You can treat yourself, but not too much.
3. Keep track of what you eat and how much you weigh at the end of each week.
4. Stay active and exercise – but only do exercises that are meant for pregnant women.

Keeping track of what you eat and how much weight you gain over the nine months will help you see where you're at with your health and weight management. However, don't get obsessive about tracking. This isn't a weight loss goal. You're aiming to ensure that you have a healthy pregnancy by tracking your food consumption and weight gain; it's like the opposite of a weight loss goal!

Speaking of, during your pregnancy, **never try to lose weight**. Your weight gain is natural during pregnancy, if you don't eat over the amount you're required to eat to stay healthy. Trying to lose weight during

pregnancy can backfire on you and cause you and your baby to have health problems.

After you give birth, remember, you'll lose some of the weight already since your baby will be born. But don't jump right into weight loss after pregnancy. Your body is going through wild rides already during pregnancy and after pregnancy. It's recommended that you should wait six weeks before you start dieting and exercising to lose the baby weight. Talk to your doctor to see when you can start losing the baby weight.

Here are extra weight and health management tips for you:

1. Know how much you're supposed to gain. Ask your doctor about the normal amount of weight you need to gain during your pregnancy. Use that as your guideline to gain healthy weight. However, this doesn't mean that you need to lose weight if you go over the recommended amount of weight. During pregnancy, many factors contribute to weight, such as water retention, fecal matter in your intestines, your baby growing, breasts getting bigger, etc. Don't focus so much on your weight number. If you see a significant increase in your weight, though, and you're worried about the weight gain, talk to your doctor first before you do anything.

2. Accept that weight gain is going to come on fast when you're pregnant. Even if you're eating a healthy diet, you may experience abrupt weight gain in the first few months of your pregnancy. For most women, it's hard to accept the weight gain, but you're not alone! Even though expectant mothers know the weight gain is healthy for their babies, they also struggle with their own self-esteem.

The best ways to avoid getting down about your weight gain is to accept that you'll gain weight and that you'll only have to deal with it for nine months. Keep yourself occupied during this time, and distract yourself from the thoughts of weight gain. This doesn't mean you ignore your feelings or self-esteem.

You can handle your insecurities during pregnancy with positive thoughts, reminding yourself that it's for your baby's health. You can use the nine months to figure out your diet and exercise after you've given birth. You can also use that time to prepare for your baby's arrival, focus on your other goals, etc.

Don't let your weight gain depress you or bring you down; this can ultimately affect your baby's health, too.

3. Exercise regularly. Despite what many people think, physical activity is great for pregnant women. You don't have to do crazy cardio workouts or anything like that. A 20-minute walk every day is more than enough exercise for you to keep yourself healthy and avoid excessive weight gain.

You don't have to do a workout all in one time frame. For instance, you can divide up a 30-minute walk in 10-minute increments. If this fits your lifestyle more, you can do this and still get 30 minutes worth of exercise into your day.

Chapter 3: Nutrition After Pregnancy

You've finally given birth to a healthy baby! Nine months of healthy eating and an overall healthy lifestyle change most likely transformed you in more than one way. From developing healthier eating habits to having a healthy pregnancy, you've achieved a lot during these nine months.

But that's not all. Your body is still going through changes and going back to what it was before you got pregnant. You still need to keep your health in check after pregnancy, especially if you're breastfeeding.

After giving birth, you'll face new challenges, such as not getting enough sleep, adjusting to your baby's unique timetable, not finding time to cook and eat, and much more. So you may find yourself struggling with your health and lifestyle after your baby has been brought into the world. But don't worry – we've outlined a simple, basic guide here to get you back on track with your healthy eating after birth.

Basic Nutrition Guidelines for Post Pregnancy

Unless your doctor requires you to increase your calorie intake even after your pregnancy, you don't have to eat 300-500 calories more now. Of course, if you're breastfeeding or breast pumping, you'll need to keep getting your nutrients so they transfer to your baby.

If you're breastfeeding, you may want to stick to the guidelines outlined in the first chapter of this e-book. For instance, avoiding caffeine completely is recommended because caffeine lasts for hours. The traces of caffeine in

your breast milk can transfer to your baby, leaving him or her up for hours and unable to sleep. You can learn more about breastfeeding by checking out our breastfeeding book: “Breastfeeding The Right Way”.

But even if you're not breastfeeding, you should still stay healthy and keep eating nutritious meals and snacks. Here are the basic guidelines for healthy eating after you've given birth:

- 3-5 servings of vegetables
- 2-4 servings of fruits
- 6-8 servings of grain
- 2-3 servings of lean meats
- 2-3 servings of dairy products

These servings are similar to the one outlined in the first chapter of this e-book, but you don't have to increase your calorie intake. Also, you should include foods with certain vitamins in your diet, such as iron and vitamin C. Certain nutrients can help combat common postpartum symptoms, such as inflammation.

During the first six weeks, your body will continue to adjust until it returns to its original form, and it's important for you to keep a close eye on it. Most women experience fatigue, constipation, and other conditions after they give birth. For your diet, make sure you eat a variety of healthy foods that contains essential nutrients e.g., protein, fiber, folic acid, vitamin C.

You should also consider eating 6-8 smaller meals throughout the day to keep your energy up and gradually lose the baby weight. With 6-8 smaller meals, you'll have better control of your portions and what you eat throughout the day. Also, since you'll be busy with your new baby, smaller meals are more manageable, and you can quickly eat them before tending to your newborn.

Here are a few tips for you to manage your health and diet after you've given birth:

1. Plan ahead. Even 1-2 weeks before your baby is born, plan your meals ahead of time. If possible, prepare and freeze them. Since you'll be busy after your baby's born, you want to get into the habit of planning ahead for everything, especially in the food area. To maintain your health postpartum, planning ahead is essential, so take time to plan your meals and what you'll be eating before your baby arrives.

2. Create a list of healthy delivery food places, and keep their numbers close by. If you're not up to cooking or need emergency food, having a list of available food places that deliver will save you from those hunger pangs. Check out healthy eating places and find out if they deliver; if they do, keep the numbers on a list and on your fridge so you don't have to scramble to find a place to eat or indulge in unhealthy take-out foods.

3. Make sure you drink a ton of water. Yes, you're busy. But you need to still maintain your health, especially during this time. Keep a large water bottle with you at all times and make sure you get enough water throughout

the day. Water is an important resource for your body and your health, so drink 1/2 a glass of water every hour.

4. If you're breastfeeding, you can lose the weight faster. Studies show that breastfeeding can help you lose weight. You burn calories when you breastfeed, so you'll see weight gradually come off after breastfeeding for some time. This is a great way to get you back to your original weight and give your little one the health he or she needs from your breast milk.

5. Get your rest! Your sleeping schedule is most likely going to be different while taking care of your baby, but that doesn't mean you have to be sleep-deprived throughout the day. You can take 10- or 20-minute naps while your baby sleeps; just set a timer to make sure you get up in case your baby is awake and needs to be fed. You don't have to do chores or other activities while your little one is sleeping. Get your sleep, even if you take short naps. Sleep can help weight loss and management, too!

Conclusion

Pregnancy changes every mom in countless ways. But some of these changes are good for you, especially the healthy eating part of pregnancy. By maintaining your health during pregnancy, not only do you ensure your baby's health, but you also develop a healthy lifestyle that you can continue for life.

Whether you had a terrible diet before getting pregnant or already had a semi-healthy lifestyle before pregnancy, these nine months will certainly change your life and views on healthy eating. Though we call it a pregnancy diet, it's not necessarily a 'diet' like a fad diet. It's a major lifestyle change to help you adjust to the new responsibilities you have as a soon-to-be mother: to keep yourself healthy in order to keep your baby healthy.

Expectant moms, get your health together, and start your healthy pregnancy lifestyle today! Nine months may see like a long time right now, but changing your diet into a healthier one and providing nutrients to your baby to help him or her grow is priceless. Don't get stuck on weight gain or too obsessive over healthy eating. Have fun, enjoy your time with your baby growing in your tummy, and love the fact that you're staying healthy for two!

Although this e-book covers a wide variety of topics related to motherhood, we wanted to put emphasis on how you can have a healthy balanced diet while pregnant. We also wanted to focus on how you can be a better you because we understand that being a mom is an exhausting – yet rewarding – role that you can ever play in life. A healthy you means a healthy baby, so that's why we at Mother's Select offer great mommy-friendly supplements for purposes such as maintaining your health and enhancing your breast milk production. Again, here are the products that we offer:

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