



Nutrients essential for a healthy pregnancy

Key nutrients for healthy pregnancy eating

- **Protein** — The building block for so many things from enzymes to antibodies, and from muscles to collagen. During pregnancy, your protein needs will increase from about 50 grams to 71 grams per day.
- **Fats** — Critical for brain and eye development, omega-3 fatty acids—particularly DHA—are in short supply for many women. Talk to your OB about taking a DHA supplement.
- **Fiber** — Fiber can help with constipation, a common side effect of pregnancy.
- **Carbohydrates** — Carbs are the primary fuel for you and your baby. Choose whole grains, fruits and vegetables which provide fiber and other important nutrients. Avoid carbohydrates with added sugar, such as sugary drinks.
- **Calcium & Vitamin D** — Together, they're the foundation for healthy bones and teeth. To help guard against your bones being depleted to provide what baby needs, get enough Calcium in your diet. Your doctor may recommend a Calcium supplement, a good idea for most pregnant women.
- **Folic Acid (Folate)** — This B vitamin is essential for spine and brain development, and for building DNA cells. Talk to your doctor about folic acid when you are thinking about becoming pregnant and make sure your prenatal supplement contains Folic Acid.
- **Iron** — A mineral necessary for your baby's neural and red blood cell development. Preventing anemia, an iron deficiency, for yourself is also a watch-out during pregnancy.

- **Iodine** — The requirement for Iodine increases during pregnancy so using iodized salt is a good solution.
- **Choline** — A B vitamin that can help support brain development. Talk to your OB about taking a supplement containing this important nutrient.
- **Zinc** — A mineral that helps build a healthy immune system, cell growth and brain development. Zinc may be in short supply in vegetarian diets.
- **DHA** — An omega-3 fatty acid that plays a key nutritional role in your baby's brain and vision development. Experts say that pregnant women should get 200-300 mg of DHA each day.

Healthy habits before and during the first trimester

Folic Acid and Zinc are must-have nutrients during the first trimester to help support your baby's developing nervous system. Since the first trimester could pass before you know you're pregnant, prenatal supplements are often recommended if you're attempting to get pregnant.

More on supplements

Supplements are used to help fill in nutritional gaps to make sure you are getting enough of the nutrients you need. Your doctor might recommend one to take before and during your pregnancy. For more information on eating well when you're expecting, check out our video on [pregnancy nutrition](#).