

Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies

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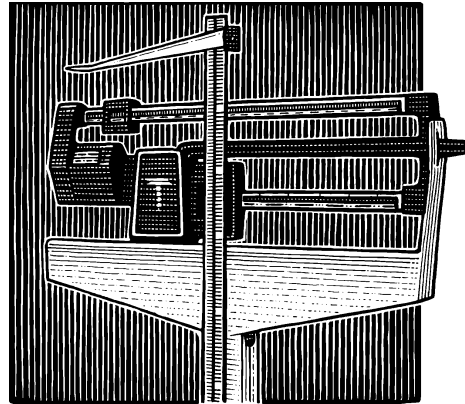
Weight Gain

What happens to the weight you gain? Some women think that once they have gained about 8 pounds for the baby, the rest will become fat. This is not true. Look at the chart below and see where you are gaining weight. Ask your doctor or nurse to explain the terms you don't understand.

Where the Pounds Go

Baby	7-8 pounds
Placenta	1 1/2 pounds
Amniotic fluid	2 pounds
Uterus enlargement	2 pounds
Breast enlargement	2-3 pounds
Maternal blood volume	3-4 pounds
Fluids in tissue	3-4 pounds
Fat deposits	7-10 pounds

Weight gain is essential for a healthy baby.



Why is the amount of weight you gain important to your baby's health? Low birth weight (under 5 1/2 pounds) is a threat to your baby's health and life. Your baby will usually gain weight properly if you follow the weight gain guidelines during pregnancy. Plan to gain about 25 to 35 pounds if your weight is normal before pregnancy. If you are underweight, overweight, or carrying more than one baby, recommended weight gain may differ. The weight gain should come from eating healthy foods.

When should you gain the weight? It is best to gain a small amount each week. You can expect to gain 2 to 4 pounds during the first 3 months of your pregnancy. After the third month, women usually gain about one pound a week. Your doctor will check your weight regularly.

You should be back to your normal weight several months after your baby is born, especially if you exercise, and continue healthy eating habits.

Suggested Readings:

Dairy Council of California (1990). *Pregnancy: A special time for nutrition and good health*. Sacramento, CA: Author

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Gong, E. (1990). Weight issues and management. In M. Story (Ed.) *Nutrition management of the pregnant adolescent* (pp. 55-65). Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse.

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