



Pregnancy Recommendations

These recommendations support your health and comfort during pregnancy.

Nutrition and Hydration

- Take a daily prenatal vitamin with at least 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid. Ask your prenatal care clinician whether you need additional iron, vitamin D, or other supplements.
- Eat a variety of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and protein foods. Include foods that provide iron, calcium, choline, and other nutrients needed during pregnancy.
- Drink water throughout the day. Aim for 8–12 cups of water daily unless your clinician gives you a different target.
- Choose 2–3 servings (8–12 ounces total) of lower-mercury fish each week; cook fish, meat, poultry, and eggs thoroughly. Choose pasteurized dairy products.

Everyday Habits

- Avoid alcohol, tobacco, vaping, cannabis, and nonprescribed drugs. Ask your care team for help if stopping is difficult.
- Keep caffeine below 200 mg per day from all sources.
- If your pregnancy has no activity restrictions, aim for about 150 minutes of moderate exercise each week. Start gradually if you are new to exercise and ask your clinician about any needed changes.
- Rest when you need to. Continue activities you enjoy and tell your care team if stress, mood, or sleep problems are affecting daily life.
- Discuss medications, herbal products, supplements, and workplace or household chemical exposures with your prenatal care clinician; do not stop prescribed medicine without talking with them.



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Nausea and Vomiting

- Try five or six small meals instead of large meals. Dry toast or crackers before getting out of bed, bland foods, and a little protein with meals may help.
- Sip fluids throughout the day. If plain water is unappealing, try other fluids you can tolerate. Ginger tea or foods made with real ginger may help some people.
- Rest and avoid foods or odors that trigger your nausea.
- If nausea persists, ask your prenatal care clinician about vitamin B6 and, if needed, doxylamine. Check with them before starting a medicine or supplement.
- Contact your care team promptly if you cannot keep fluids down, have much less urine, feel dizzy, or are losing weight.

Heartburn

Heartburn is common in pregnancy. Hormonal changes and pressure from the growing uterus can allow stomach acid to move up into the esophagus.

- Eat smaller meals more often, and avoid eating within three hours of bedtime.
- Sit upright while eating and after meals. Raise your head and shoulders when sleeping if symptoms occur at night.
- Notice and limit foods or drinks that trigger symptoms; rich, spicy, fatty foods and caffeine are common triggers.
- If lifestyle steps are not enough, ask your prenatal care clinician or pharmacist about an antacid or alginate that is appropriate in pregnancy. Take antacids at least two hours apart from folic acid or iron supplements.
- Seek medical advice if symptoms are persistent, severe, or accompanied by trouble swallowing or unexplained weight loss.



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Constipation

- Add fiber-rich foods such as fruit, vegetables, beans, and whole grains. Increase fiber gradually and drink water as you do.
- Stay active as your pregnancy allows. If constipation continues, ask your prenatal care clinician about a fiber supplement or a pregnancy-appropriate medicine.
- If an iron supplement seems to worsen constipation, ask your clinician whether a different form or schedule is suitable; do not stop prescribed iron on your own.

Preparing for Childbirth

- Consider a childbirth class offered by your hospital, clinic, or community program. Discuss your questions, birth preferences, and pain-relief options with your prenatal care team.
- Optional reading: *Ina May's Guide to Childbirth* by Ina May Gaskin.

Get Medical Care Right Away for Urgent Warning Signs

Examples include a severe or worsening headache, vision changes, trouble breathing, chest pain, severe belly pain, fever, vaginal bleeding or fluid leaking, severe vomiting, or a baby moving less than usual. Tell the care team that you are pregnant.

Reference Guidance

ACOG: Healthy Eating During Pregnancy

ACOG: Morning Sickness

ACOG: Exercise During Pregnancy

ACOG: Having a Baby

FDA/EPA: Advice About Eating Fish

NHS: Indigestion and Heartburn in Pregnancy

NHS: Common Health Problems in Pregnancy

CDC: Urgent Maternal Warning Signs