

Nutrition plays a major role in maternal and child health.



A healthy maternal diet and body composition reduces the long term health risks in the mother and in the offspring.¹

There's no need to eat for two^{1,2}



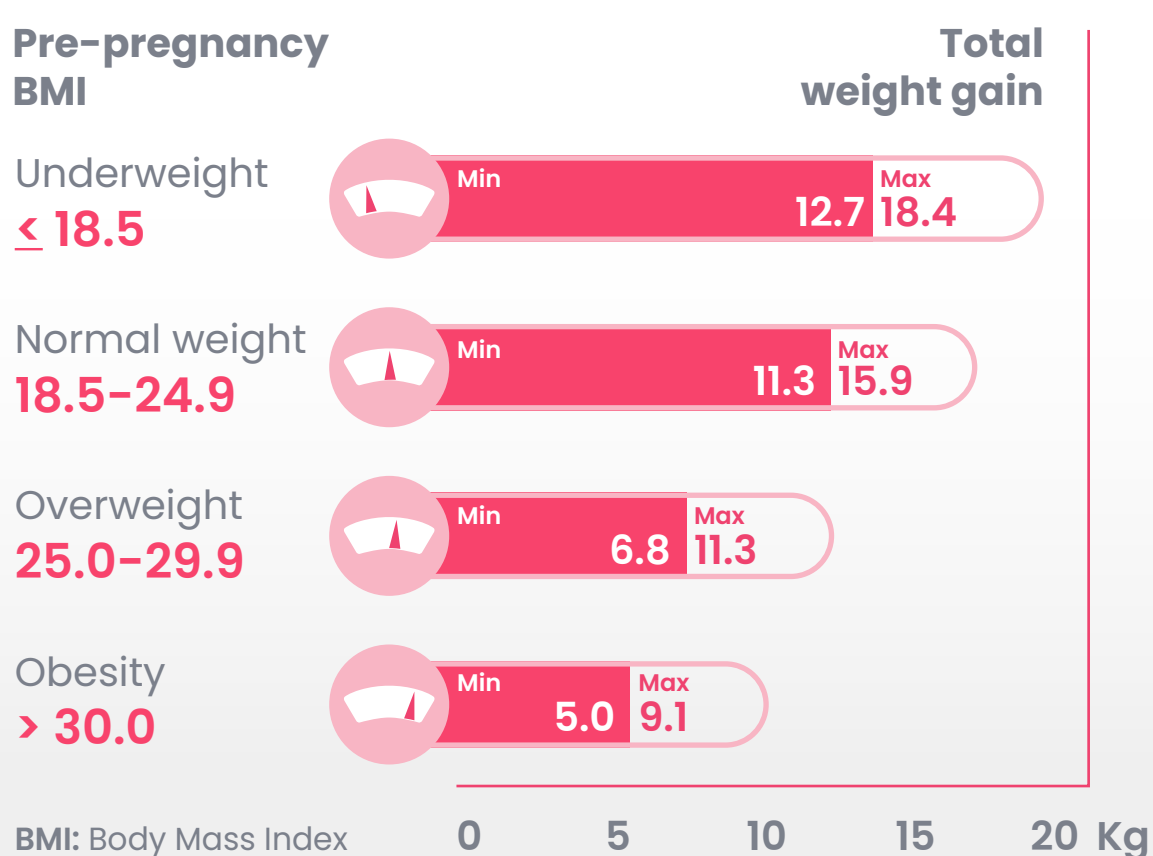
Healthy pregnant women should not aim to double their food intake but need to add the recommended additional energy intake with well-balanced nutritious food to support the development of the baby.¹



The diet should include nutritious food from the **5 food groups** to achieve the **recommended weight gain**.²

Major physiological changes during pregnancy

Recommended weight gain³



Further changes⁴⁻⁷

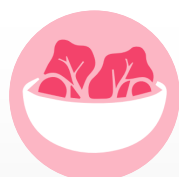
- **Metabolic and hormonal changes**
e.g. weight gain due to insulin resistance
- **Changes in cardiovascular function**
e.g. blood volume or heart rate
- **Changes in the immune system**
e.g. risk and severity of specific infections
- **Changes in the gastrointestinal system**
e.g. constipation



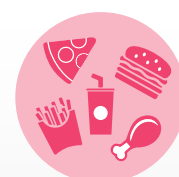
Only 39% of the maternal weight gain is related to foetal growth & development³

Maternal diet and pregnancy outcomes⁸

Summary of population studies



Women with a high intake of vegetables, plant foods, and vegetable oils were at decreased risk of preeclampsia, small for gestational age (SGA), preterm delivery, and congenital malformations.



Women with high consumption of processed meat, sweet drinks, and salty snacks were at increased risk of preeclampsia, SGA, and preterm delivery.

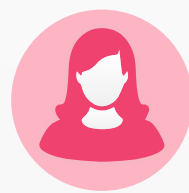
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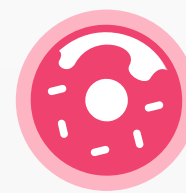
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Loss of control over eating is common during pregnancy.



3 out of 10 women admit loss of control (LOC) over eating during pregnancy.¹

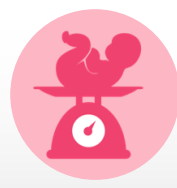


Women with LOC over eating had higher total energy intake, had more snacks, and had lower levels of vitamins B6, A, C, and folate intake.²

LOC over eating during pregnancy is linked to maternal weight gain and obesity in the offspring.¹



Women with LOC over eating are more likely to have higher-than-recommended weight gain.



Deliver children with high birth weight.



Children of women with frequent LOC are more likely to be overweight or obese.

Maternal disordered eating behavior (loss of control over eating) and dysregulated bodyweight have detrimental effects on the course of pregnancy and birth outcomes.

Data from large cohort studies and registry data.



Maternal outcomes³

- Increased risk of antepartum hemorrhage
- Hyperemesis gravidarum
- Higher rates of miscarriage
- Cesarean sections
- Postpartum depression



Fetal outcomes⁴

- Lower and higher birth weights
- Intrauterine growth restrictions
- Small head circumference
- Neurobehavioral dysregulations early after birth
- Premature deliveries
- Perinatal mortality

A healthy diet is vital during pregnancy, and it is important to note that eating for two is just a myth. What is crucial is not just the amount of food to intake, but to eat a variety of nutrient-dense foods every day to get the right balance of nutrients that support both the mother and the baby.

References

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