

Nutritional Matters For A Healthy Pregnancy

A pregnant mother will always want to ensure that she does the right things for her baby's health. This means proper nutrition for herself, since what she eats is what her baby gets!

According to medical experts, pregnant women need to increase their daily calorie intake by about three hundred calories. A higher amount will lead to the mother gaining extra weight, which is unhealthy for both mother and child. Cravings are a natural part of pregnancy, but always ensure that you do not over-indulge! A bagel with low-fat cream cheese or an additional tuna sandwich is all the extra you need!

Protein is an essential requirement for a pregnant mother, which is why some of the extra calories you consume must come from foods rich in protein. Pregnant women require sixty grams of protein every day, which is 10 grams more than what women who are not pregnant need. Examples of food rich in protein include dried beans, nuts, cheese, fish, chicken or lean meats. These extra ten grams can also come from about one and a half ounces of meat.

Women need to have stronger bones during the pregnancy as well as for birth. This is why the calcium requirement for women is increased in pregnancy. Women generally tend to get only 75% of the amount they require, so an increase of calcium intake is essential for them. Some of the best sources of calcium are milk, cheese and yogurt, which can be lean to avoid calorie intake whilst fulfilling the calcium requirement. Other good sources of calcium are green and leafy vegetables.

Moderate increases in the intake of vitamins and mineral salts are also encouraged for pregnant women. Vitamin D needs to be taken daily, since it increases the absorption of calcium in the blood.

Pregnant women find their blood volume increasing gradually over the course of the pregnancy, so extra iron is another major requirement! The recommended amount is 30 mg/day, which is twice the amount required by non-pregnant women. Sources of iron are red meats, fish and poultry. Some cereals are also enriched with extra iron, as are some types of bread.

Eggs are good for pregnant women too. Consumption of vitamin C alongside eggs aids in increasing their effectiveness.

An essential vitamin for fetal growth and development is folic acid. A multivitamin containing about six hundred micrograms of folic acids is recommended per day for pregnant women. Any more than this increases the risk of neural defects such as spina bifida. If you're not comfortable taking the pill, eat plenty of dark green leafy vegetables, peanuts, citrus fruits and whole grains, all of which are a natural source of folates.

All the nutrients that pregnant women need are available in vegetarian diets, but getting them in the forms required is difficult. Also, pregnant vegetarians have to monitor the amounts they eat to obtain the required nutrient levels. But then again, this is a common part of being vegetarian!

Pregnant women should talk to their doctors about all the dietary changes they need to make early in the pregnancy. Your physician will ask you for a total update on what your diet is like, before they can give you the right advice about all the nutritional aspects of pregnancy. Don't go for the myths and old wives tales concerning nutrition for yourself and your baby. Go to the experts and get expert advice!