



NUTRITION

Approximately 74% of American women lack a full complement of nutrients in their diet. While the effects of this depletion may not be overtly apparent, they could be having an effect at the molecular level, such as in the ovary. It could also have effects later in your life and on your offspring.

Proper nutrition is important for your overall wellbeing, fertility and for the health of your baby. If you are overweight or obese during pregnancy you are at an increased risk for various complications including: miscarriage, gestational diabetes, high blood pressure, difficult vaginal delivery and an increased risk for a C-section. Balancing your weight and optimizing nutrient levels should be a priority both before conception and during pregnancy.

Body-Mass Index or BMI is one way to assess your ideal body weight and assess your health risks. BMI is a calculation based on your height and weight. Getting your BMI as close to the normal range as possible will improve your chances of getting pregnant and having a healthy pregnancy.

- ✓ A BMI within the 19-25 range is considered normal.
- ✓ A BMI in the 25-30 range is considered overweight.
- ✓ A BMI over 30 is considered obese.

WHAT TO EAT

A great way to ensure getting the most nutrients and health from your food, is to focus on eating foods in their original form. Eat fresh vegetables, fruit, nuts, legumes/beans and lean protein. Try to make each meal balanced with a healthy fat, carbohydrate, lean protein and plenty of fruits and vegetables.

The USDA choosemyplate.gov is great resource for balancing a healthy diet and lifestyle. The most recent guidelines are there to help individuals come up with balanced easy to follow food choices. They will help ensure not just the amount of food but also that the foods contain enough good nutrients and limit dangerous or harmful nutrients. These guidelines recommend:

- Half your plate should be fruits and vegetables
- Focus on whole fruit
- Vary your veggies
- Make at least half your grains whole grains (such as brown rice and whole/multigrain breads)
- Vary your proteins: should include plant based and fish, chicken, lean meats.
- Healthy fats such as olive oil, , avocados, nuts such as whole almonds
- Eliminate sugar drinks
- Limit processed foods, sugar and saturated fats (oils or fats that are solid at room temperature such as coconut oil, are generally not healthy).
- Whole milk and yogurt are generally more nutritious than fat-free foods.

Vegetables and Fruits: Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables. It is ideal to have your diet be 60 to 70 percent fruits and vegetables. An easy guide for varying your vegetables is to try and eat vegetables that are different colors from each other.

Fish: Eat small fatty fish twice a week (flounder, salmon, whitefish, tilapia and others). Avoid eating fish such as bass, king mackerel, shark, swordfish and albacore tuna because of their high levels of mercury.

Proteins/Meat: To increase your fertility eat more protein from plants (such as black beans, lentils, tofu, quinoa, and nuts) than from animals. If you choose to eat red meat have it only once or twice a week. Buy the leanest cuts available and if you can, try to buy free-range or grass-fed to avoid antibiotics in the meat. Keep serving sizes modest – no bigger than a deck of cards or the palm of your hand.

Carbohydrates: The quality of the carbohydrates that you eat is what matters. It is important to choose the whole-grain types. Eat slow digesting carbohydrates such as brown rice, whole grained pasta, and dark bread. Choose beans, vegetables and whole fruits.

Good Fats: olive oil, avocado oil, macadamia nut oil, and flaxseed oil. Nuts such as cashews, almonds, pistachios, seeds, wild salmon and fresh avocado are excellent sources of fat.

Bad Fats: Canola oil, soy oil, coconut oil, sunflower oil, cottonseed oil, grapeseed oil, safflower oil, non-butter spreads (margarine) and trans-fat spreads.

Sample Menu:

| | Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|------------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|----------|
| Breakfast | Oatmeal topped with berries with tea/coffee | Two egg whites on whole wheat bread with lettuce and tomatoes | Fruit with Greek yogurt | Protein smoothie | Whole grain pancakes with tea/coffee | Whole grain tortilla with scrambled eggs, salsa and guacamole | |
| Morning Snack | Carrots with hummus | Handful of raw nuts and a fruit | Banana with almond butter | Whole grain crackers with low fat mozzarella string cheese | Yogurt | Celery with peanut butter | |
| Lunch | Tuna wrap | Grilled chicken salad | Turkey sandwich with vegies | Salad with grilled salmon | Vegie wrap | Vegie soup with one slice whole grain bread | |
| Afternoon Snack | Banana with almond butter | Whole grain crackers with low fat mozzarella string cheese | Carrots with hummus | Yogurt topped with granola | Celery with peanut butter | Handful of raw nuts and a fruit | |
| Dinner | Baked chicken, quinoa and broccoli | Whole grain tacos with black beans and vegies | Hearty vegie and chicken soup | Grilled chicken salad | Turkey meatballs over brown rice | Baked salmon with cauliflower and quinoa | |