



Pregnancy & Lactation Nutrition Guide

Hello and Congratulations on your pregnancy! Thank you for choosing Apex Nutrition, LLC to create a meal plan and nutrition education packet for you. This guide will direct you through the other pamphlets. I will try to explain these tools I have provided, how they relate to your pregnancy/lactation nutrition goals and why they are important. This packet can be overwhelming, so take a deep breath and realize that you do not have to master all of this in one day. Start by following the meal plan. By doing this, you will automatically make improvements to your nutrition. Then, read through the other pamphlets (maybe just one per week) to learn why I have suggested the foods on the meal plan and how to have a healthy relationship with food throughout pregnancy/lactation and for life. Here goes...

First, look at "Pregnancy and Lactation Wellness Checklist." Use this checklist to make sure you cover all the aspects of pregnancy and lactation. Overall wellness while nurturing yourself and your baby should be the focus of healthy eating for you. Check off topics as you master them!

Next, take a thorough look at your Mix and Match Meal Plan. If you pick one option for each meal and snack, you will eat/drink an appropriate amount of calories in 5-6 small meals per day for each trimester. This calorie level and pattern of eating on the meal plan, in addition to 30 minutes of light exercise 3-5 days/week, should allow you to meet your nutrition goals based on your height, BMI, and stage of pregnancy or lactation. As stated on your meal plan, you should make any adjustments needed to the meal plan based on your trimester and rate of weight gain as you go. The meal plan incorporates the nutrition education taught with this packet. If you would like, you can switch the meals around (such as eat your larger dinner meal at noon and a lighter lunch-type meal in the evening). You can also substitute your own meal/snack ideas as long as they have similar calories as the meal or snack on the meal plan and are nutritious (high in fiber, low in unhealthy fats - as you'll learn with this packet). The Recipe Collection contains a variety of delicious and easy dinner and vegetable recipes that compliment the meal plan. Begin following the meal plan as soon as possible.

Of note, the meal plan is intended for the calorie needs of a pregnant or lactating woman doing light exercise (walking, Pilates, low-intensity yoga, etc.). If you are doing more intense exercise, such as jogging, cycling, moderate-high intensity aerobics, moderate-high intensity yoga, hiking, moderate intensity swimming, etc., you need to add more calories to your meal plan. I recommend adding approximately 100 calories per 10 minutes of moderate-high intensity exercise.

Eating small meals and snacks throughout the day can improve your energy levels and metabolism. A word of caution: when I suggest a snack, I am suggesting a healthy, intentional, and portioned snack between two meals. I suggest these snacks because they:

- * help improve metabolism by providing your body with a consistent energy flow
- * decrease the risk of being overly hungry at the next meal and overeating
- * increase the chances of getting all the nutrients you need in a day
- * decrease the amount of calories you eat at one meal and thereby decrease the amount of calories your body will likely store as fat.

This is different than snacking or grazing throughout the day mindlessly without regard to portion. It is also important that you drink 64-80 oz. of water each day - more when you exercise, especially in hot/humid conditions. Many experts believe that hydration is another key to improving metabolism.

Next, glance look at the "Pregnancy and Lactation Nutrition" pamphlet. Take time during week 1 of following this program to read it thoroughly. It covers all the major topics of pregnancy and lactation nutrition, including which vitamins and minerals you need, the amount of extra calories you need, what to avoid, and what to do about nutrition-related pregnancy complications. As you study your calorie needs, take a look at the "Pregnancy Weight Gain Chart." It will help you chart your gain, week by week, and keep you on track to gain 25-35 lbs if your pre-pregnancy BMI is 28-40 lbs if it is less than or equal to 19.9; 15-25 lbs. if it is 20-24.9; 15-25 lbs if your BMI is 30-34.5; or, 15 lbs if it is 35+. If you do not know what your pre-pregnancy BMI is, use the calculator provided on the webpage. By getting this overview, you should be confident that you can make healthy choices and gain appropriately throughout your pregnancy. The meal plan provided will also help you get your nutrients and the correct amount of calories.

Next, glance at the handout entitled "Carbohydrates and Fiber." During week 2 of following this program, read through this sheet and discover the importance of a high fiber diet. As explained in this handout, fiber is the foundation of preventative nutrition. In my experience, it has been one key to successful wellness and weight maintenance on any calorie level. I believe it helps for a variety of reasons such as: 1) it makes you feel full so you eat appropriately, 2) it improves metabolism, and 3) it promotes healthy digestion and elimination of wastes (which can be difficult without a high fiber diet during pregnancy). In Western societies, much of our food (including grains) is processed and void of the vitamins, minerals, and fiber naturally found in the food. Therefore, we have to be intentional about choosing foods that are 100% whole grain and whole food (fresh fruits and vegetables). The starch that is found in processed grains works in your body just like sugar. Although most people wouldn't feel good about eating any meal high in sugar, many people essentially do just that by eating refined grains. It is imperative to replace foods with these processed starches with their food counterparts that are whole grain and whole food. Almost all grain products (cereals, breads, tortillas, crackers, etc) can be found in 100% whole grain form. Other sources of fiber include fruits and

vegetables, nuts and seeds, and beans. Since constipation can be a specific problem during pregnancy, try to get 25+ grams of fiber per day!

Also, glance at the "Calcium" handout. As you will read during the 3rd week of following this program, calcium is especially important during pregnancy. It does a lot more in your body than just give you and your baby healthy bones. It is essential for health and can help you maintain a healthy weight!

Next, glance at "Reasons for your Food Choices." Take time during week 4 of following this program to work through the exercises in this sheet. Food choices and healthy weight gain are about so much more than just hunger and food for most people. No matter how effective a meal plan, if you continually go back to poor food habits and triggers, you may never overcome an unhealthy relationship with food. A healthy relationship with food is important during pregnancy, during lactation, as a parent, and throughout your life!

Lastly, I have included a food and exercise diary. You can use this as your own way of tracking your progress and to identify eating and exercise triggers and habits. Keeping a food diary is one of the best ways to keep yourself accountable on a daily basis and ensure your success! I also recommend beginning food journaling as soon as possible.

Just to make sure you are consistent in tracking your weight changes, here are some tips for obtaining weight and body fat percentages:

- * weigh at the same time of day, and after the same activities (ie. Don't weigh one time after taking a shower and the next time before taking a shower - it is probably best to simply weight in the morning right after you get out of bed).
- * if you weigh daily, expect some fluctuations based on hydration and water retention. It is okay to weigh daily, but only judge progress based on a weekly weight (ie. every Monday).
- * if you get your body fat percentage based on caliper measurements, make sure the measurer is a trained professional and has evaluated numerous clients using calipers. Have the same person perform the measurements each time. Also, the more measurement sites, the more accurate.
- * if you use a scale with a body fat percentage feature, make sure you take your measurement at the same time of day each time and after the same activities (just like weight). These machines calculate a value based on the speed that an electrical signal is run through your body - muscle is mostly made up of water, so it conducts the signal while fat does not contain water and does not conduct the signal. If you are more hydrated for one measurement than another, you will get inaccurate results.

Thanks again for your purchase. I believe this is a great start and you will be on your way to accomplishing your pregnancy/lactation nutrition goals in no time! In 3-4 weeks, you

should be consistently following the meal plan and you should understand the basics of healthy portions, pregnancy nutrition, fiber, calcium, and eating for fuel. If you decide that you would benefit from weekly emails from Apex Nutrition for encouragement, accountability, and answers to any questions, please request this service by sending an email to services@apexnutritionllc.com. It costs \$30/month and includes 1 weekly initial email and 1 response email/week. I know you can do it! I hope you believe this, too!

Take care and have a great day!

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