

USEFUL FACTS

Pregnancy

Morning Sickness

- Nausea and vomiting are common during early pregnancy. If your vomiting is severe and you are unable to keep any food or fluids down, you should contact your doctor.
- Often morning sickness is worse when you are tired and hungry. Things you could try that may help with the symptoms included:
 - Eat regularly, choosing smaller meals and snacks
 - Have less high fat and spicy foods
 - Try a carbohydrate snack before getting out of bed in the morning (slice of dry toast, a cracker)
 - Drink small sips of flat lemonade or ginger ale
 - Try ginger, or foods flavoured with ginger.

Indigestion & Heartburn

These are common towards the end of pregnancy. To help indigestion and heartburn try:

- Eat regularly, choosing smaller meals and snacks.
- Have less high fat and spicy foods.
- Avoid drinking fluids with meals.
- Avoid lying down straight after a meal. Going for a walk may help.
- Raise the head of the bed or use extra pillows.

Constipation

- Constipation can occur because of the pressure from your growing baby and from hormonal changes causing your gut muscles to relax.
- Choose wholemeal and wholegrain breads and cereals and vegetables and fruits.
- Drink plenty of fluid every day.
- Include some low-moderate exercise e.g. walking every day.

Folic Acid

- Folic acid is a vitamin and is needed for the formation of blood cells and new tissue. During early pregnancy your need for folic acid is higher.
- Lack of folic acid has been linked with birth defects such as spina bifida.
- It is recommended that women take a folic acid supplement (0.8mg) daily for four weeks before you might become pregnant through to 12 weeks after actually becoming pregnant.
- Choose foods fortified with folic acid or naturally high in folic acid:
 - well washed, fresh, raw or lightly cooked vegetables
 - well washed raw fruit
 - breads and cereals, especially wholegrain
 - cooked dried beans and peas

Listeria

- Listeria is a common bacteria which can cause food-related illness.
- In pregnant women this illness can cause miscarriage and stillbirth.
- All foods should be safely handled, stored and protected from cross contamination.
- You should not eat:
 - Smoked fish, pre-cooked fish and uncooked fish or seafood products that are chilled or frozen (unless re-heated thoroughly and eaten hot)
 - Pate
 - Cold pre-cooked chicken
 - Ham and other chilled pre-cooked meat products
 - Stored salads and coleslaws
 - Raw (unpasteurised) milk
 - Surface-ripened soft cheese (e.g. brie, camembert)

What should I eat?

- Eating well and doing moderate exercise during pregnancy is important for you and your baby.
- You need a variety of healthy foods from the four major food groups every day to provide for your growing baby as well as to maintain your own health.
- During pregnancy, you need extra calcium for your baby's growing bones and teeth, as well as your own.
- Your body also needs more iron and zinc, but care must be taken with these foods to avoid Listeria.
- You can expect to eat more food as your pregnancy progresses but this does not mean you need to "eat for two".
- There is no exact healthy weight gain during pregnancy but thin women may need to gain more weight and overweight women less.
- Dieting and/or vigorous exercise during pregnancy are not recommended.
- Alcohol is also not recommended during pregnancy as even small amounts will enter the baby's bloodstream and can affect their development.