

# Eating well during pregnancy

A healthy diet is an important part of a healthy lifestyle at any time, but is especially vital if you're pregnant or planning a pregnancy. Eating healthily during pregnancy will help your baby to develop and grow, and will keep you fit and well

## Eat for you, not for two

Maintaining a healthy weight during pregnancy means it's easier for you to carry your baby, and to have fewer complications at birth. It also means that your baby is more likely to be a healthy weight – both at birth and as they grow up.

It's only in the final three months of your pregnancy that you need an extra 200 calories a day. That's the same as two slices of wholemeal or wholegrain toast and margarine.

So... if someone tells you eat for two, say no thanks. You only need to eat for you!

## What to include

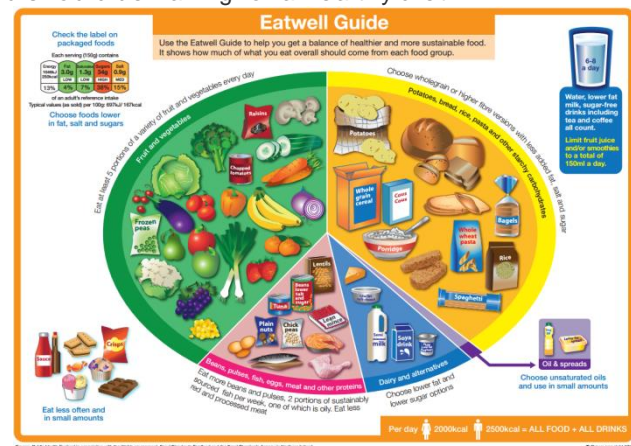
Eating a variety of foods will help your baby get the range of nutrients that it needs to develop and be healthy, the Eatwell Guide shows the different types of foods you should be having for a healthy diet.

**Fruit and vegetables:** try to eat at least 5 portions of fruit and veg a day, to provide the vitamins, minerals and fibre you and your baby needs.

**Starchy carbohydrates:** such as bread, potatoes, breakfast cereals, rice, pasta and noodles. Try to eat wholemeal versions if you can as they will fill you up and give you lots more nutrients than the white varieties.

**Protein:** foods like fish, poultry, eggs, beans, pulses, nuts and red meat, contain lots of protein which provide the building blocks for your baby to grow.

**Dairy products:** includes milk, cheese and yoghurt. These contain calcium and other nutrients that your baby needs, choose low fat, low sugar varieties where possible and aim for 3 servings per day.



**Healthy snacks in pregnancy** If you get hungry between meals, try not to eat snacks that are high in fat and/or sugar, such as sweets, crisps or chocolate. Instead, choose from the following:

- Peanut butter and chopped banana on wholemeal toast
- Salad vegetables, such as carrot, celery or cucumber with hummus dip
- Low-fat, natural yoghurt or fromage frais with berries
- Dried apricots, figs or prunes
- A few crackers with soft cheese spread
- Handful of nuts, seeds and dried fruit
- Vegetable and bean soups
- Plain popcorn, try a sprinkle of paprika for an added kick
- Unsweetened breakfast cereals, or porridge, with milk
- Milky drinks or unsweetened fruit juices
- Fresh fruit
- Baked beans or poached egg on toast

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Foods to avoid	Why should these foods be avoided?
<p><b>Meat-</b> Avoid undercooked meat and poultry- it should not be pink or have any blood coming from it. Cook all meat thoroughly as well cooked meat is the safest. Meats such as Parma ham and chorizo should be avoided as some methods of curing have failed to remove the risk of toxoplasmosis.</p>	<p>There is a risk of toxoplasmosis from a tiny parasite that lives in raw meat, soil and cat poo which can be harmful towards the baby. Remember to store raw meat at the bottom of your fridge so the raw meat doesn't drip juices and contaminate other food.</p>
<p><b>Liver-</b> As well as liver, you should try to avoid all products that contain liver such as pates and liver sausage.</p>	<p>Liver contains large amounts of vitamin A. Too much of this can cause harm to the baby, which has been linked to birth defects. Be aware of vitamin A in multivitamins.</p>
<p><b>Pate-</b> All types of pate should be avoided including vegetable pate. It is much better to eat well cooked slices of ham.</p>	<p>Pates may contain Listeria, a bacteria which can cause infection called Listeriosis. This can cause harm to the baby during pregnancy or cause illness in new borns.</p>
<p><b>Certain types of cheese-</b> Cheeses which soft and contain veins such as Danish Blue, Roquefort should be avoided. Cheeses which a mould-ripened soft (white rind) such as brie, blue brie or goat's cheese should also be avoided.</p>	<p>Cheese can also can Listeria which runs the same risk as above with pate.</p>
<p><b>Raw Eggs and undercooked eggs-</b> It is important when cooking eggs to ensure that they are cooked well through and yolks and whites are solid all the way through. Eggs in different recipes that you cook are safe however avoid recipes which contain raw eggs such as homemade mayonnaise.</p>	<p>Having raw eggs can run the risk of Salmonella which is known as a common cause of food poisoning which can make you unwell.</p>
<p><b>Certain kinds of fish-</b> You should limit the amount of tuna to no more than two fresh steaks or four medium cans of tinned tuna a week. Oily fish should be no more than two portions a week. Avoid Shark, Swordfish and Marlin all together. You should also avoid eating raw shellfish.</p>	<p>Too much tuna or any shark, swordfish or marlin can be dangerous as they contain high levels of mercury. At high levels of mercury can harm the baby's developing nervous system. Raw shell fish should also be avoided because of the risk of food poisoning.</p>

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