



## | pregnancy DOs and DON'Ts |

### > Tips for a healthy pregnancy

**ATTEND ALL DOCTOR APPOINTMENTS.**

**FOLLOW A HEALTHY DIET.**  
(See Nutrition DOs and DON'Ts.)

**TAKE PRENATAL VITAMINS AND SUPPLEMENTS RECOMMENDED BY YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER.**

**DO NOT DRINK ALCOHOL, USE ILLEGAL DRUGS OR SMOKE.**

**GET ADEQUATE REST.**

**STAY AWAY FROM DIETS OR WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAMS.**

**EXERCISE AT LEAST 30 MINUTES PER DAY.** (See enclosed FAQ for more information on safe exercise.)

**CONSULT WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER BEFORE TAKING ANY MEDICATION.**

### Things to avoid during pregnancy

**Alcohol:** There is no safe level of alcohol use during pregnancy, so it's best not to drink at all while you are pregnant. Alcohol use during pregnancy is the primary known cause of developmental disabilities and birth defects in the United States and can cause physical, mental, behavioral and learning disabilities that last throughout your child's life.

**Illegal drugs:** Drug use during pregnancy can cause miscarriage, birth defects, preterm birth or even death. Drugs taken after delivery can be passed to your baby through breast milk.

**Cigarettes:** Smoking during pregnancy exposes your baby to toxic, cancer-causing chemicals and decreases the amount of oxygen and nutrients for your baby. Smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke can lead to miscarriage, high blood pressure, low birth weight, asthma, colic, childhood obesity and increased risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

**Heat:** Avoid extreme heat including hot tubs, tanning beds and sun bathing.

**Risky physical activities:** Avoid high impact activities such as roller coasters, horseback riding and skiing, including jet skiing. If you have a question about the safety of an activity, ask your healthcare provider.

## Nutrition tips for a healthy pregnancy

- Eat three to five small meals per day. Include snacks if needed. Eat smaller, more frequent meals if you have morning sickness.
- Take prenatal vitamins and other supplements as recommended by your healthcare provider.
- Take folic acid to help prevent birth defects. The best way to get enough folic acid is by taking your prenatal vitamin every day. Also include cereals, breads and other grain products enriched with folic acid in your diet.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Eat a variety of healthy foods such as vegetables, fruit, whole grains, lean meat, beans and low-fat dairy products. Limit sweets and fatty foods. Eat at least one dark green or orange vegetable every day and choose fresh fruit instead of fruit juice.
- Cook meat, fish or poultry until well done. Check temperature with a thermometer.
- Include low-mercury fish and shellfish in your diet (six ounces two times a week). The omega three fatty acids and other oils in fish are important nutrients for the development of your baby's brain. Shrimp, ocean-caught salmon, canned light tuna, cod, catfish, pollock and flounder (except from New Jersey waters) are low in mercury.

## Foods to avoid

- **Raw fish, especially shellfish and sushi**
- **Shark, swordfish, tilefish, king mackerel, wahoo, farm-raised fish (salmon, tilapia) due to high mercury levels**
- **Tuna Steak**
- **Unpasteurized soft cheeses (brie, feta, blue, queso blanco, etc.)**
- **Unpasteurized milk and juices**
- **Herbal supplements and teas**
- **Cold lunch meat**

## Foods to Limit

- **Packaged lunch meats**  
*(okay once or twice a week; should be heated until steaming hot)*
- **Hot dogs** *(limit to once or twice a week; cook thoroughly)*
- **Caffeine**  
*(limit to the equivalent of one cup of coffee daily)*
- **NutraSweet® and other artificial sweeteners**

