

# Pregnancy weight gain chart for BMI < 25kg/m<sup>2</sup>

## Congratulations

Pregnancy is an exciting time for you and your family. It is a great time to focus on your health. Weight gain is an important part of any healthy pregnancy. Gaining too much weight or not enough weight can affect your health and the health of your baby, not just during pregnancy but also for many years to come.

Monitoring your weight during pregnancy can help keep you on track for a healthy weight gain. This weight gain chart can be customised just for you. Bring this chart with you to each visit to discuss with your health care provider what your weight gain goals for this pregnancy should be and to monitor your progress.

## Why your weight is important?

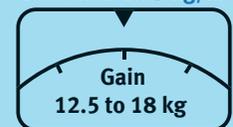
Women who are underweight or do not gain enough weight have a risk of preterm birth and a baby small for its gestational age. Women who are overweight or gain too much weight during pregnancy have a higher risk of:

- high blood pressure
- gestational diabetes
- a large baby (macrosomia)
- caesarean sections
- difficulty losing weight after their baby is born. This can also increase your long-term risk of diabetes, heart disease and some cancers
- a baby who is overweight in childhood and as an adult.

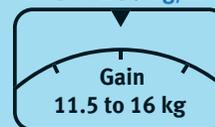
## How much weight gain is recommended?

The weight you should aim to gain depends on what your weight (and body mass index - BMI) was before you became pregnant. BMI is the number used to work out the recommended amount of weight gain for you. If you were given a handheld record from antenatal clinic you may find your pre-pregnancy BMI in here. If not ask your health care provider to help you work it out. Following is the recommended amount of weight to gain based on BMI numbers. Choose the weight gain range that matches your pre-pregnancy BMI.

**Pre-pregnancy BMI  
Less than 18.5 kg/m<sup>2</sup>**



**Pre-pregnancy BMI  
18.5 to 24.9 kg/m<sup>2</sup>**

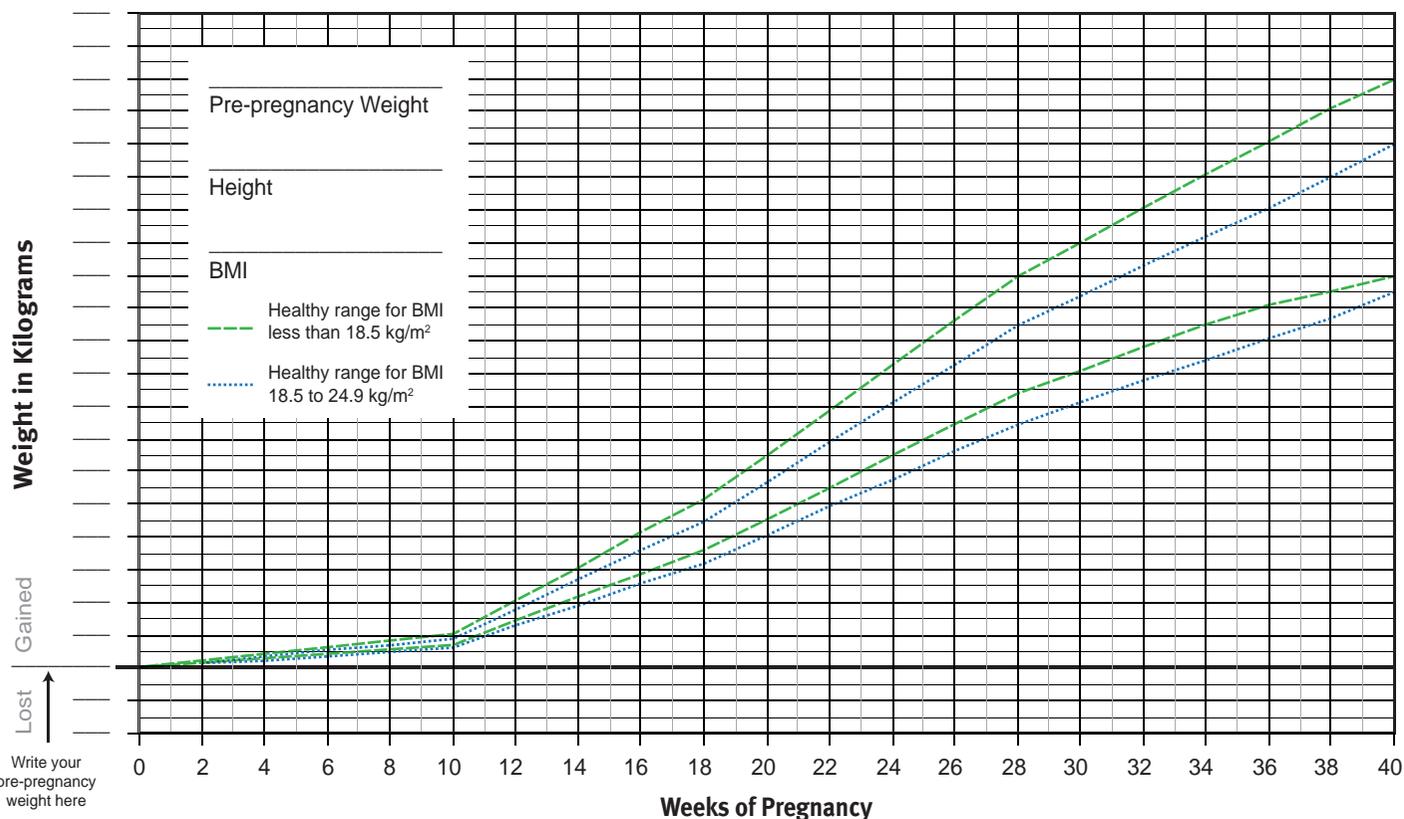


If you are having twins or triplets the recommendations are a bit more. Talk with your health care provider about how much is right for you.

## How to use this tracker:

Every pregnancy is different. What worked for you last pregnancy or for your mum may not work for this pregnancy. This tracker will help you work with your health care provider to customise a weight gain plan that is right for you.

- 1 Write down your weight before pregnancy in the two spaces provided- first in the box inside the chart and second at the starting point at the left hand side of the chart
- 2 Ask your health care provider two things- your height, and your pre-pregnancy BMI- you can work this out yourself using a BMI calculator found online at <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/healthyactive/publishing.nsf/Content/your-bmi>
- 3 Starting from your pre-pregnancy weight add 1kg and write this number on the line above where you wrote your pre-pregnancy weight, follow this pattern until you reach the top of the chart and all the empty lines are filled.
- 4 Start recording your weight as early as you can. Place a dot at your current weight and your week gestation. Connect the dots every week to track and compare your weight with the recommended weight gain chart lines for you.
- 5 Discuss your progress when you have a health care visit. If you are falling above or below the chart turn over for some quick tips to get back on track.



Adapted and reprinted with permission from the National Academy of Sciences, Courtesy of the National Academies Press, Washington, D.C.

## What should I do if I am not gaining enough weight?

Sometimes women who have morning sickness early in pregnancy find it difficult to gain enough weight. Sometimes they even lose a small amount of weight. If this happens to you, you do not need to be concerned as long as you start to gain weight in the second trimester of your pregnancy.

It is important to have three meals a day, and also have between-meal snacks, such as morning tea, afternoon tea and supper.

### Good snacks include:

- fruit toast
- dried fruit, nuts, and seeds
- yoghurt
- muesli bars
- cheese & crackers
- milk drinks

If you are unable to eat well due to nausea or vomiting and are losing weight or you are not gaining enough weight ask your midwife for a referral to see an Accredited Practising Dietitian.

## What should I do if I am gaining weight too quickly?

Gaining too much weight when you are pregnant can be harmful to you and your baby.

To control your weight gain, limit foods that are high in fat and sugar. Make sure you are not 'eating for two'. It is also important to include regular physical activity on most days.

Include plenty of vegetables in at least 2 of your meals each day and plan your meals and snacks. Try fruit or reduced fat yogurt for snacks.

## Being active during pregnancy

To get the most health benefits, a good goal is at least half an hour of physical activity each day. You do not have to do it all at once. Your exercise can be spread over the day, in ten-minute blocks. Try three ten minute walks, or two fifteen-minute periods of activity. Many activities are safe during pregnancy. Some activities to try include swimming, walking, cycling on an exercise bike, yoga or pilates, low-impact aerobics, like water aerobics or a light resistance gym program.

## Limit the amount of fat you eat by:

- limiting biscuits, cakes, chips, and crisps
- reducing the amount of fat in cooking
- choosing low fat dairy products (e.g. milk, yoghurt)
- avoiding cream and sour cream
- trimming fat from meat before cooking
- using healthy cooking methods like grilling, steaming, baking
- removing skin from chicken
- limiting high fat takeaway foods.

## Limit high sugar foods by:

- drinking water, not soft drink or cordial
- using 'diet' or low joule products
- limiting fruit juices to one glass per day as these are high in sugar (even 100% juice)
- limiting chocolates, lollies, sweets and desserts.

Listen to your hunger cues and only have a snack if you are actually hungry.

Watch your serve sizes, especially of foods like rice, pasta, potato and meat.

**If you would like more support for a healthy weight gain in pregnancy ask your midwife for a referral to an Accredited Practising Dietitian. For more information about eating well in pregnancy or to manage you pregnancy weight gain please see the following resources.**

### Healthy eating and weight gain in pregnancy

[https://www.health.qld.gov.au/nutrition/resources/antenatal\\_HeatWtgain.pdf](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/nutrition/resources/antenatal_HeatWtgain.pdf)



**Partnering with Consumers** - National Standard 2. (2.4.1) .  
Consumers and/or carers provided feedback on this publication.  
CPN 2014/860