

Being both under and overweight are strongly linked to complications before, during and after pregnancy, so it is important to discuss a pregnant woman's weight and possible risks as well as providing support to make healthy changes. Below is a reminder of the potential complications related to the different weight categories on the chart overleaf:

<b>BMI &lt;18.5kg/m<sup>2</sup></b> Underweight	<p>Being underweight can be unhealthy and lead to problems such as osteoporosis and anaemia. It also reduces a woman's chances of becoming pregnant.</p> <p>A woman in this range may not be eating sufficient food to supply her body and, if pregnant, the growing baby with the nutrition they need. It is important to provide information on healthy eating and to encourage weight gain during pregnancy.</p>
<b>BMI 18.5 – 25kg/m<sup>2</sup></b> Healthy weight	<p>Women in this range are at least risk of weight-related complications.</p> <p>It is important to encourage women to eat healthily and to be physically active to help prevent excess weight gain and the related risks.</p> <p>There is no need to "eat for two". Excess weight gain should be avoided. For women of a healthy weight, the advised weight gain in pregnancy is 11.5-16kg or 25-35lbs (US Institute of Medicine).</p>
<b>BMI 25-30kg/m<sup>2</sup></b> At risk of developing weight related health problems	<p>The main risks for a woman who is overweight at the start of pregnancy is that of significant weight gain and obesity.</p> <p>It is important to advise that a healthy diet and being physically active will benefit both the woman and her unborn child during pregnancy, helping to prevent excess weight gain and also helping her to achieve a healthy weight after giving birth.</p>
<b>BMI &gt;30kg/m<sup>2</sup></b> At greatest risk of developing weight related health problems	<p>Being in this range poses a risk to the health of the mother and baby and this should be carefully and sensitively explained. Risks include: increased risks of gestational diabetes, hypertension and thromboembolism, preterm birth, more likely to have labour induced, to have an instrumental or operative delivery and to have a PPH, risk of postpartum infection, increased risk of maternal death.</p> <p>It is important to advise that a healthy diet and being physically active will benefit both the woman and her unborn child during pregnancy, help to prevent excess weight gain and will also help her to move towards a healthy weight after giving birth.</p>

For further information please refer to the NICE guidance for 'Dietary interventions and physical activity interventions for weight management before, during and after pregnancy' (<http://www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/live/13056/49926/49926.pdf>).

Slimming World provides healthy lifestyle support to pregnant and breast-feeding mums. During a member's pregnancy the support focuses on healthy lifestyle behaviours rather than weight loss. A healthy, balanced diet without calorie restriction is promoted, and members are encouraged to build regular activity into their daily life. Mothers are encouraged to breast-feed and we provide additional tailored nutrition advice during this time to help new mums manage their weight.

# discussing weight during pregnancy

a guide for midwives

Slimming World is working closely with the RCM as an RCM Alliance Partner to help to support pregnant women and breast-feeding mothers in managing their weight.

While discussing a woman's weight can sometimes be difficult, it is an extremely important conversation to have. This pregnancy weight range chart has been created to help you discuss a woman's weight and possible weight-related risks during her pregnancy.



# what range am I in?

To use this chart, first you need a measurement of the woman's height and weight. Using these, read off the chart opposite to see which colour range she falls into. The descriptions below explain what it means to be within each range and can be used in discussion with the woman.

The back page of the booklet provides further information on the potential complications across the weight ranges.

## In this range you are underweight:

- You may not be eating enough food to supply your own body and your growing baby with the nutrients you both need
- Being underweight and trying to stay within this range can be unhealthy
- It is important to eat a healthy balanced diet and to try to gain weight

## The healthiest range:

- You are at least risk of developing weight-related medical problems and having complications during your pregnancy and birth
- For a healthy pregnancy it is important to follow a healthy, balanced diet and include some daily physical activity

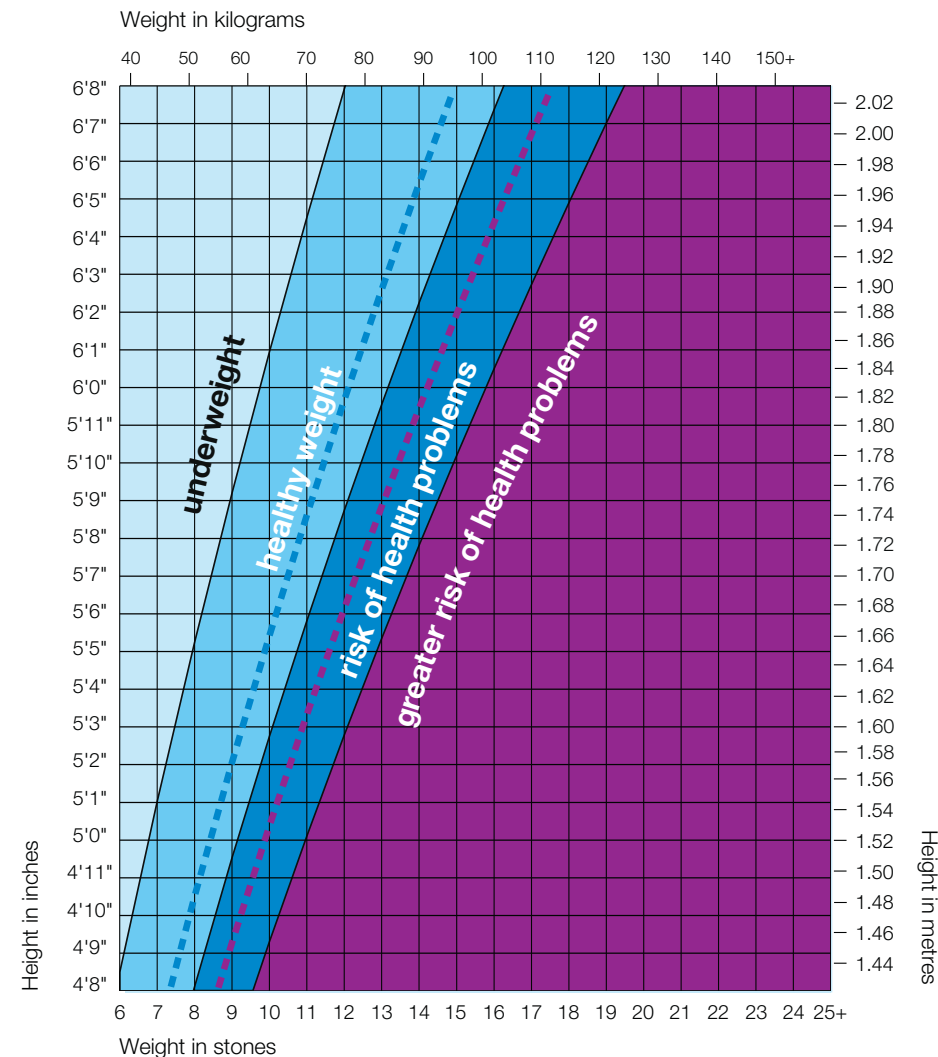
## In this range you may be at risk of developing weight-related health problems:

- Making small changes to your diet and becoming more active will help to reduce this risk and could also improve any existing health problems
- Making healthy lifestyle changes now will help you avoid gaining excess weight during pregnancy, making it easier to achieve a healthy weight after giving birth

## In this range your health is at greatest risk:

- You are at increased risk of a number of weight-related complications during your pregnancy
- Making changes to the foods you eat and becoming more active will help to reduce the health risk and will benefit both you and your baby
- Making healthy lifestyle changes now will help you avoid gaining excess weight during pregnancy, making it easier to move towards a healthy weight after giving birth

# pregnancy weight range chart



**Please note:** the point at which someone's health is at risk due to their weight varies between ethnic groups. It is recommended that Asian (South Asian and Chinese), black African and African Caribbean populations use the area between the dotted lines as an indicator for when their health may be at increased risk due to their weight (see the dark blue range overleaf), and the area to the right of the purple dotted line as an indicator that their health is at greater risk (see purple range).

NICE Public Health Guidance PH46