

San Gabriel Valley Perinatal: Nutrition in Twin Pregnancies

If you are carrying twins you will need to increase the amount of nutrients and calories you eat to meet your own nutritional needs and the high demands of your growing babies. The requirements for some nutrients increase each trimester and may not be met by diet alone. Additional iron, folate, calcium, magnesium, and zinc supplementation has been recommended beyond the usual prenatal vitamin.

Recommendations for Nutritional Supplementation in Twin Pregnancies

First trimester	Second and third trimesters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One multivitamin tablet with iron (30 mg) daily. If not provided by their diet or multivitamin, supplement additional: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Calcium 1,500 mg ○ Magnesium 400 mg ○ Zinc 15 mg ○ DHA/EPA 300-500 mg ○ Folic acid 1 mg ○ Vitamin D 1,000 IU ○ Vitamin C 500 - 1,000 mg ○ Vitamin E 400 IU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two multivitamin tablets with iron (30 mg) daily. If not provided by their diet or multivitamin, supplement additional: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Calcium 2,500 mg ○ Magnesium 800 mg ○ Zinc 30 mg ○ DHA/EPA 300-500 mg ○ Folic acid 1 mg ○ Vitamin D 1,000 IU ○ Vitamin C 500 - 1,000 mg ○ Vitamin E 400 IU

20% of the calories in your diet should come from protein, 40% from carbohydrates, and 40% from fat. You should eat three main meals with three smaller snacks in between the main meals. Eat a wide variety of foods. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations for weight gain, and the Society of Maternal–Fetal Medicine recommendations for calorie intake during a twin pregnancy are given below and are based on your weight before pregnancy.

Suggested Weight Gain and Calorie Intake by Body Mass Index (BMI) in Twin Pregnancies

BMI Before Pregnancy	Recommended Weight Gain	Daily Calories (kcal)	Protein (grams)	Carbohydrate (grams)	Fat (grams)
18.5 or less Underweight	27 – 28 kg 50 - 62 pounds	4,000	200	400	178
18.5 to 24.9 Normal weight	17 - 25 kg 37 - 54 pounds	3,000 - 3500	175	350	156
25 to 29.9 Overweight	14 - 23 kg 31 - 50 pounds	3250	163	325	144
30 or more Obese	11 - 19 kg 25 - 42 pounds	2700 - 3000	150	300	133

REFERENCES

-Goodnight W, Newman R; Society of Maternal–Fetal Medicine. Optimal nutrition for improved twin pregnancy outcome. *Obstet Gynecol.* 2009 Nov;114(5):1121-1134. PMID: 20168116.

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention .Weight Gain During Pregnancy Accessed 10/14/2024

Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/maternal-infant-health/pregnancy-weight/index.html>

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