

NUTRITION RECOMMENDATIONS DURING PREGNANCY

Nutrition is an important tool in every mom-to-be's pregnancy toolbox, contributing to a healthy mother and baby at the end of this special journey. Pregnancy is a unique time in a woman's life and the Registered Dietitians at Stronger U absolutely love guiding our pregnant members through those 9 months (and beyond). As wonderful as it is, pregnancy can also present unique nutrition-related challenges. Some women struggle with nausea, particularly during early pregnancy. Hunger levels can rise and fall with surprising speed. And of course, it seems like from the moment a pregnancy is announced, everyone has some conventional (and often questionable) wisdom to share. Working with a well-informed dietitian and coach can give each mother the confidence to know she's getting evidence-based guidance on how to eat for optimal health, x2!



STRONGER U
NUTRITION

Some of the common questions our team can help each mom answer include:

- Do I really need to eat for two?
- How do I manage this nausea?
- Is too much protein harmful for my baby or me?
- Is fish safe to eat?
- What supplements can I safely take? Should I? (see our [Stronger U article](#) on this topic!)
- How much weight should I gain by the time I'm ready to deliver? (We have a [Stronger U article](#) on this one too!)



Real Life Application

While we can't answer all of the above questions here, we'll touch on a few. The answer to the first is, no, you do not need to eat double your normal calories during pregnancy! In fact, while there is a great deal of fetal growth going on during the first trimester, a woman's daily calorie requirements barely change at all in those 3 months.

Calorie needs gradually increase through the second and third trimester, with a mom needing roughly 500 more calories (per day) by the end of her pregnancy than she was consuming in early pregnancy. However, this is only an estimate - your coach will individualize recommendations to your unique situation.

The same applies to **weight gain recommendations**. These are individualized to each mother's starting weight, weight gain trends in previous pregnancies (if applicable), and any health considerations that need to be taken into account.

The current Dietary Reference Intakes (DRI) suggest that pregnant women only need about 0.4 g protein/lb/day (roughly 60g/day for a 150-lb woman). However, as we have discussed at Stronger U, DRIs represent the minimum amount needed of a nutrient to stave off illness, not the suggested amount for optimal health and thriving. Recent research suggests that a higher intake of protein is not only safe for mom and baby but is actually preferred for improved health outcomes. This research recommends roughly 0.6g protein/lb/day (90g/day for our reference 150-lb woman) during the second trimester, and as much as 0.7g protein/lb/day (105g/day for the 150-lb woman) during the third trimester.



A final, common area of concern during pregnancy is **fish intake**. Fish are normally a wonderful choice for macro-aware individuals, as many types are very high in protein and other nutrients, while being relatively low in fat. However, mercury and other environmental pollutants in some types of fish can be particularly harmful to the rapidly developing brain tissue of a baby, so some fish that would be completely safe for a non-pregnant woman to consume are not recommended immediately prior to and during pregnancy. Fish-loving moms can refer to the EPA Guidelines (linked below) for information on their favorite type(s) of seafood.



Main Takeaway

Pregnancy is a time associated with a lot of change and for many, a heightened level of interest in nutrition. You will receive a lot of advice for other moms, all well intended- but be sure to check with your doctor, your Stronger U coach and some of the resources linked below to help determine the best plan specific to you!



Resources

[Calorie Needs Changes Throughout Pregnancy: Read The Article >](#)

[Protein Requirements of Healthy Pregnant Women: Read The Article >](#)

[EPA Guidelines: Pregnant Women & Fish Consumption: Read The Article >](#)

