

Where Does the Weight Go?

We believe that if you are eating a nutritious and varied diet with appropriate supplements and moderate exercise, you will gain exactly the amount of weight that you need to gain during your pregnancy.

It is sometimes helpful to understand where the weight you are gaining ends up. You will most likely find that you gain the most weight during the second trimester as your placenta and baby bulk up and your blood volume expands by as much as 50% over your pre-pregnant volume!

Your baby most likely will weigh somewhere between 7 and 10 pounds. Your placenta will weigh in the 1-3 pound range. Amniotic fluid weighs in at around 2 pounds and your uterus at 2 to 2 1/2 pounds. The increased blood volume and other body fluids weigh between 3 1/2 – 7 pounds. The remaining weight gain is in increased body fat and breast tissue.

If you suddenly gain or lose a significant amount of weight, you will want to discover the answer to that mystery.

It is important to know that women who start out their pregnancies underweight often gain much more during pregnancy than do other women. A woman who starts out overweight or obese may see little weight gain or even lose weight during her pregnancy.

Please do not diet or restrict your intake in an attempt to control your weight while pregnant. This is not the time to begin a weight loss program. This is the time to eat as healthfully as you possibly can for your sake and your baby's. If you are not eating a lot of extra foods that are not nutritionally significant (sweets, fried foods, etc.), we say again that you will most likely gain exactly what you need to gain for this pregnancy.

Resources:

The Complete Book of Pregnancy and Childbirth, Sheila Kitzinger, 2006.
The Family Pregnancy, M.J. Bov, 1995.