

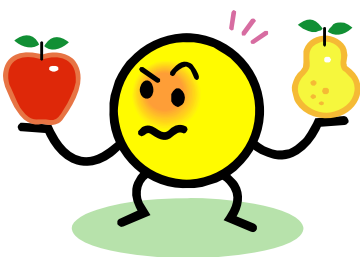


## Nutrition during Pregnancy By Eunice Gonzalez

Congratulations! You are pregnant. By reading this article, you are taking the first step to delivering a healthy baby. Below you will find some tips to help you meet the challenges of balancing nutrition and physical activity every day. The first thing to do when you find out you are pregnant (besides jump for joy) is to set up a visit with your doctor. Your doctor will be able to give you specific information on what to expect during the pregnancy, including how much weight you should gain, discomforts you might experience and expectations of delivery. He/she will also be able to give you information on nutritional and physical activity needs during pregnancy.

It is important to keep in mind that throughout your pregnancy you have to provide extra nutrients to your baby to help him/her grow healthy. Following the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Dietary Guidelines will help you.

- The MyPyramid Plan for Moms will help you find a customized daily food plan that is based on your age, gender, activity level and stage in pregnancy. You can find out additional information at [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov).
- The Dietary Guidelines describe a **healthy diet** as one that
  - emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products;
  - includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts; and
  - is low in saturated fats, *trans* fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars.



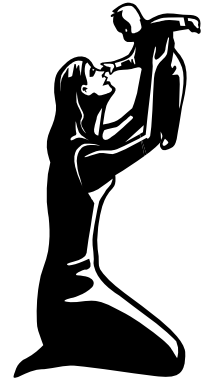
With all of the planning and excitement you are experiencing, it is easy to forget about eating healthy. Grab a piece of fruit when you want a quick snack and energy boost. Fruits like apples, oranges, peaches and pears are naturally high in fiber, which helps reduce constipation. Best of all most fruits require no prep work, just wash and go.

It is also very important to stay hydrated. Make sure you drink 64 ounces of non-caffeinated fluid a day. That is half a gallon of liquids everyday. Good choices would be water, non-fat or low-fat milk and 100% fruit juice. Just remember that water is calorie free so be sure to keep some water bottles in your bag, in the car, and around the house. Be sure not to forget to drink water before, during and after any physical activity.

Now that you have lots of energy from the good foods, you are eating and are hydrated from all that water, why not get your heart pumping with a little physical activity? Again, you should check with your doctor before you start any exercises, but movement can be a great addition to your day. The recommendation is at least 30 minutes of physical activity each day. "Where am I going to find 30 minutes?" Well you can break it up into three, ten-minute breaks throughout

the day. Do an activity you love. Making a snowman and doing snow angels in the winter and gardening and walking in the summer will make that 10 minutes go by fast. Still seem like it is too much? Start with ten minutes a day and then add a few minutes every couple of days until you reach thirty minutes. Being physically active is good for you and the baby.

Balancing everything in your day can seem overwhelming, so remember to take small steps toward a healthy balance between eating right and being active. The stress you feel is stress the baby feels. Find something that relaxes you and spend at least 5 minutes doing it. Some favorites of mine are listening to music; relaxing, soothing sounds can put you into a calm mood when it all seems too much to handle; dancing around or moving to upbeat music can give you a needed energy burst as well. Whatever you decide, remember to take some time during the day to enjoy this amazing time.



If you are pregnant, breastfeeding, or have an infant or child under 5 years of age, you may be eligible for The Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). Call the Cornell Cooperative Extension [WIC Program](#) in Schenectady at **518-346-8818** or e-mail us at [Schenectady@cornell.edu](mailto:Schenectady@cornell.edu) to find out if you may be eligible. Any other questions about this topic can be addressed to [mlc37@cornell.edu](mailto:mlc37@cornell.edu) or (518) 372-1622, ext. 246. Be sure to come back for our next installment of *Balancing Your Life* when you will learn more about the importance of eating right and physical activity for your child.

Information adapted from [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov) and [www.fns.usda.gov/wic/](http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/)