

# Navigating Through Nutrition



**Erin W**

Let's talk nutrition! What are the major food groups to pay attention to when pregnant, what do we stay away from? Erin, a Registered Dietitian at Family Wellness, is here to help with some basic nutrition questions for pregnant women.

## What are some healthy foods pregnant women can eat?

**FIBER!** Plenty of fruits and veggies and whole grains. Pregnancy hormones can cause some slowing of the digestive tract which can lead to constipation, gas and bloating. Also important to make sure that they consume enough fluids along with the fiber.

**Protein and Iron:** Eggs, meat, dark green leafy veggies – blood volume increases 20-50% during pregnancy and it is important to make sure that the hemoglobin remains at normal levels to prevent anemia. Protein needs also increase due to the structure building of the fetus. Animal based proteins are best (dairy, eggs, meat, fish, poultry) as they contain all 9 essential amino acids needed from the diet. The best plant source is soy.

**Folic Acid** – found in grains and often is added to cereals. Also dark green leafy veggies and avocados. (Most prenatal vitamins contain large amounts of folic acid and iron)

**Calcium** – milk, cheese, yogurt are all important foods to have daily to ensure that mom does not get depleted. Baby takes all the nutrients it needs from mom, so if her diet is poor it is mom that usually suffers more than baby.”

## On average how many additional calories do pregnant women need to consume?

+ 300kcal/day for pregnancy and + 500kcal/day for breastfeeding

## Additional Information?

Exercise regularly (YOGA!).

Make sure that food is prepared safely. It is recommended to avoid deli meat – but I am ok with it if they are very fresh or heated to at least 120 degrees (think hot ham and cheese)

**Fish** – great source of protein. Recommended to have 2-3 servings/week. Avoid large ocean fish due to mercury levels (fish that eat other fish have higher levels of mercury)

**Carbohydrates** – need enough to maintain energy levels, but not excessive amounts to avoid too much weight gain”



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