

# Five Common Weight Gain Myths

Taken from the Institute of Medicine 2009 report

**Myth:** “I have to eat for two during my pregnancy.”

**Truth:** “Eating for two” may cause you to gain too much weight. Your baby needs far fewer calories to be healthy than you need. Gaining too much weight during pregnancy is not good for your health and can be risky for your baby’s health too.

**Myth:** “I should gain the same amount as the women in my family.”

**Truth:** Every pregnancy is different. What worked for your mom may not work for you. You should work with your healthcare provider throughout your pregnancy to be sure you gain the weight that is right for you.

**Myth:** “The more weight I gain, the healthier and stronger my baby will be.”

**Truth:** Gaining too little or too much weight during pregnancy may harm your health and the health of your baby. Gaining too much weight increases the risks for a C-section, early delivery, or a bigger baby, which can make for a complicated birth. Gaining too little increases the risk of having a premature baby and can cause future health problems as your baby grows up.

**Myth:** “I don’t have to worry about my weight gain during my pregnancy. I’m already at my ideal weight.”

**Truth:** Talk to your healthcare provider to determine which weight category you fall under and how much weight you should gain during your pregnancy. Reference the chart on the right to see the average amount of weight you should gain.

**Myth:** “I shouldn’t worry about losing weight after my first pregnancy if I’m planning on having another child. I’ll lose all the weight together.”

**Truth:** If you are planning on having another child, losing the weight gained during your previous pregnancy is vital. Having another baby before losing weight may cause problems during delivery.

## HOW MUCH WEIGHT SHOULD YOU GAIN WHEN YOU’RE PREGNANT?

If you start your pregnancy as...	You should gain...
<b>Underweight</b> BMI less than 18.5	<b>28–40 lbs.</b>
<b>Normal Weight</b> BMI 18.5–24.9	<b>25–35 lbs.</b>
<b>Overweight</b> BMI 25.0–29.9	<b>15–25 lbs.</b>
<b>Obese</b> (includes all classes) BMI greater than or equal to 30.0	<b>11–20 lbs.</b>

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# CONGRATULATIONS!

Pregnancy is an exciting time for you and your family, and it also is a good time to focus on your health. Gaining too little or too much weight during pregnancy may affect your health and the health of your baby. To help, check out this easy-to-use pregnancy weight tracker customized just for you.

Bring this tracker with you to discuss with your health care provider what your weight gain goals for your pregnancy should be.

## WHY YOUR WEIGHT IS IMPORTANT

Many women enter pregnancy overweight or obese. While any woman can be overweight, the condition is more common among Hispanic women.

## START YOUR PREGNANCY AT A HEALTHY WEIGHT

Reaching a healthy weight before you get pregnant is the first step to ensuring your health and the health of your child. If you know you are overweight and you plan to become pregnant, work with your health care provider to develop a weight-loss plan before becoming pregnant.

## GAIN WITHIN THE GUIDELINES

The weight categories are based on your pre-pregnancy body mass index (BMI), which is a measure of body fat based on your height and weight. Talk to your health care provider to determine which weight category you fit into and how much weight you should gain during your pregnancy.

THE IOM'S GUIDELINES ON WEIGHT GAIN DURING PREGNANCY RECOMMEND ON AVERAGE:

**UNDERWEIGHT**  
WOMEN GAIN



**NORMAL WEIGHT**  
WOMEN GAIN



**OVERWEIGHT**  
WOMEN GAIN

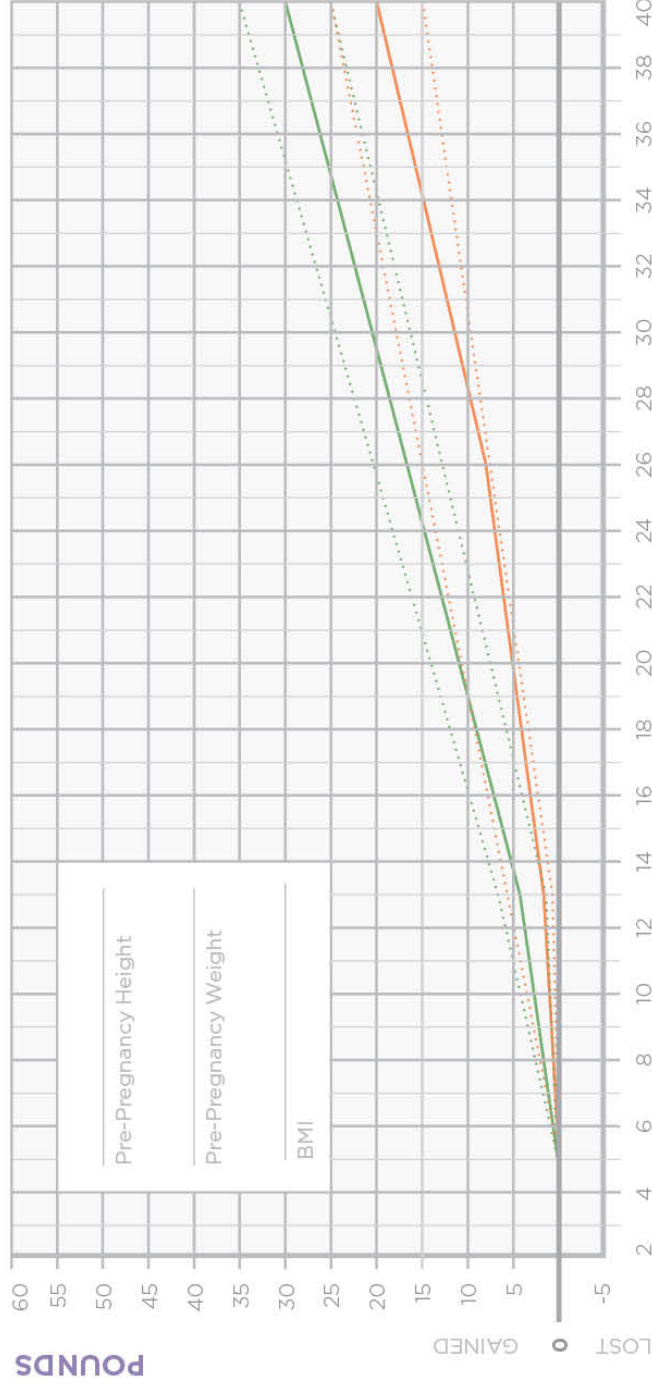


**OBESE**  
WOMEN GAIN



## TRACK YOUR WEIGHT DURING PREGNANCY

Place dots on the chart to track your progress.



Healthy range for normal-weight women  
Healthy range for overweight women

## WEEKS OF PREGNANCY

## HOW TO USE THIS TRACKER

Every pregnancy is different. What worked for your mom or *abuela* may not work for you. This tracker will help you work with your health care provider to customize a weight gain plan that is right for you. Follow the steps below to ensure you are on the right track.

- 1 Write down your weight before pregnancy.
- 2 Ask your health care provider for three things: your height, weight, and BMI. Write this information down in the box provided.
- 3 Start recording your weight as early as you can. Every week, place a dot at your current weight gain. Connect the dots every week to track and compare your weight with the goals set by you and your health care provider.
- 4 Discuss your progress when you go in for a check-up and don't forget to ask for your weight every time!