

WEIGHT GAIN DURING PREGNANCY

How much weight should I gain during my pregnancy?

Most women need to gain 25 to 35 pounds during pregnancy. How much weight you should gain depends on how much you weighed before you got pregnant. If you are very slim, you need to gain more. If you are very heavy, you need to gain less. The chart on the other side of this page can help you decide how many pounds you should gain. Talk with your health care provider about the right weight gain for you. Then use the chart to track your weight during pregnancy.

I don't feel hungry. Do I have to eat if I don't feel hungry?

Many women do not feel hungry early in pregnancy. This is because of hormone changes in the body. Later in pregnancy, it may be hard to eat because your stomach has less room between your baby and your lungs. You will feel better all through your pregnancy if you try to eat something every 1 to 2 hours. Eating a big meal may make you feel sick. Eating just a slice of apple, a carrot stick, or a bit of whole wheat bread will help you feel better if your stomach is upset. It is important to remember that what you put in your mouth goes to your baby. If you don't put anything in your mouth, your baby gets nothing to eat.

People tell me I'm "eating for two." Does this mean I have to eat twice as much?

No. Most women only have to add about 200 calories every day to their diet. Many women can eat less and still be very healthy and grow a healthy baby. Your baby depends on you for all of its food, so you do have to eat well. Make healthy changes in your diet—eat lots of fruit and vegetables, eat only whole wheat bread, and cut down on fats. You don't have to eat much more than you normally do.

What happens if I don't gain enough weight?

If you do not gain enough weight, your baby may be too small. Babies that are too small can have problems right after they are born. They may have trouble breathing or eating. Some babies who are too small at birth have trouble learning when they get older and go to school. Talk with your health care provider about how many pounds you should gain to make sure your baby is not too small.

What happens if I gain too much weight?

If you gain too much, you will have more weight to lose after the baby is born. Women who gain a lot of extra weight have a higher chance of needing a cesarean birth.

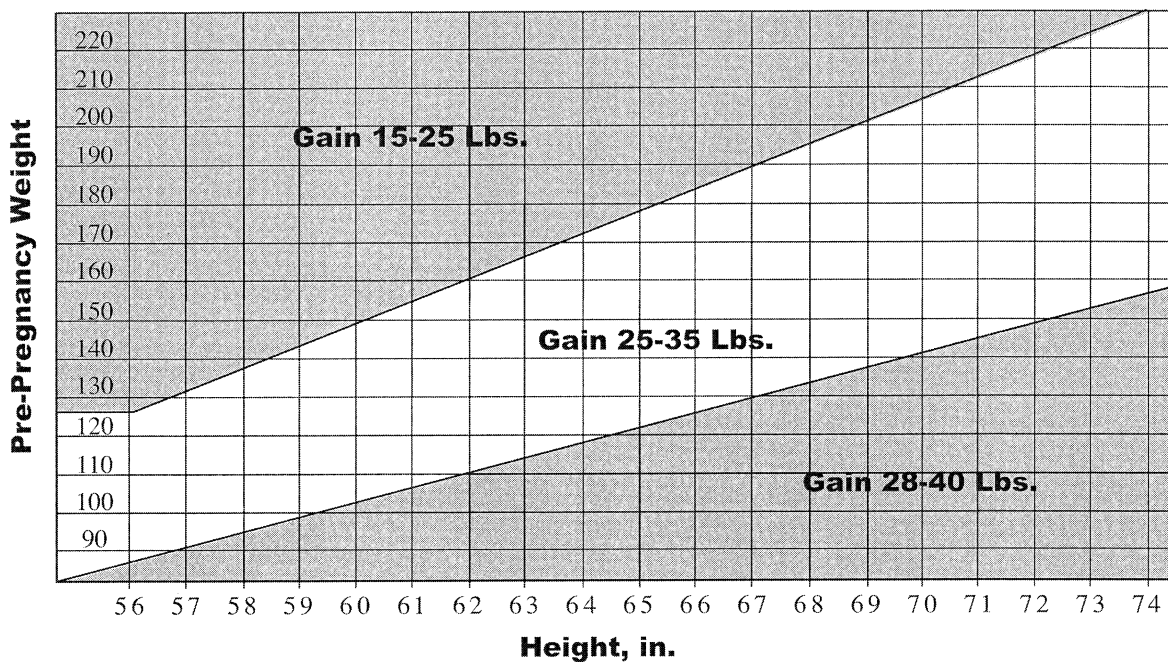
Should I gain the same amount every week?

The baby will gain most of its weight during the last 2 months of your pregnancy. You should try not to gain much weight at first. Plan to gain most of your weight in the last months of your pregnancy.

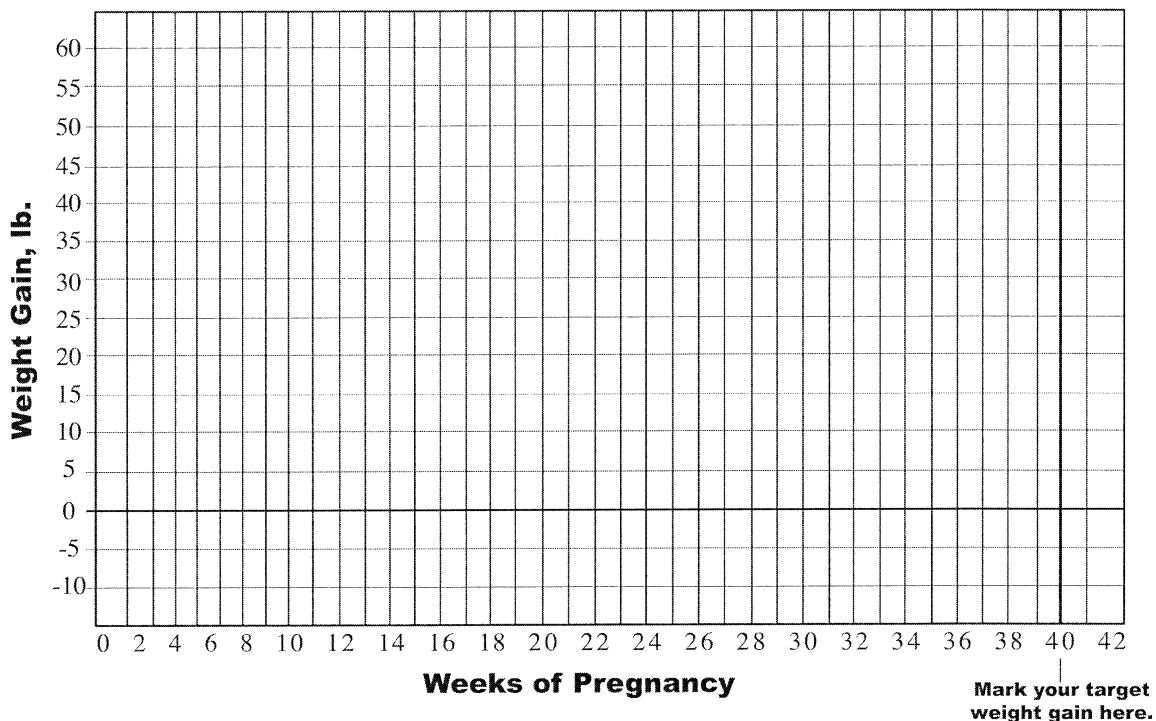
Where To Go for More Information:

The March of Dimes Pregnancy and Newborn Health Education Center: "Weight Gain During Pregnancy"
This Web site has lots of good information on pregnancy and parenting. It is very reliable and an easy-to-use Web site.

http://www.marchofdimes.com/pnhec/159_153.asp



My target weight gain is _____ lb.



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