



**The Lebanese Society of  
Obstetrics and Gynecology**  
Women's health promotion series

**Women's Health**

Pregnancy, Healthy Eating, Weight-  
loss, Exercise

**Pregnancy**

Common Problems During Pregnancy:

- Backache & pelvic joint pain
- Constipation
- Cramps
- Deep vein thrombosis
- Faintness
- Feeling hot
- Headaches
- High blood pressure & pre-eclampsia
- Wetting/soiling yourself
- Indigestion & heartburn
- Itching
- Leaking nipples
- Nausea & morning sickness
- Nose bleeds
- Passing water often
- Hemorrhoids
- Severe itching & obstetric cholestasis
- Skin & hair changes
- Sleeplessness
- Slow growing babies
- Stretch marks
- Swollen ankles, feet & fingers
- Teeth & gums
- Vaginal discharge
- Vaginal bleeding
- Varicose veins

\* Talk to your doctor if you are worried or don't understand any of these conditions. Make sure to ask what is normal and what isn't and when you should see your doctor.

**Food & Nutrition**

Make sure you get enough daily vitamins:

- Vitamin D
- Folic acid
- Iron
- Vitamin C
- Calcium
- Vitamin B6 & B12
- Vitamin A

**Avoid:**

- Mold ripened soft cheese (brie, camembert, etc.)
- Soft blue veined cheese (Roquefort, gorgonzola)
- Pate
- Raw/partially cooked eggs
- Raw/undercooked meat
- Liver products
- Shark, marlin, swordfish, limit tuna
- Raw shellfish
- Unpasteurized milk
- Foods with soil on them
- Caffeine (no more than 200mg/day)
- Sushi

**\* STOP SMOKING &  
AVOID SECOND-HAND SMOKE! \***

**ALCOHOL can cause:**

- Restricted growth**
- Facial abnormalities**
- Learning & behavioral disorders**

### **Medicine/Drugs:**

Always check with your doctor before taking any medicine. Make sure your doctor or other healthcare professional knows you're pregnant before they prescribe you anything. Use as few over the counter medicines as possible.

### **Exercise**

Don't exhaust yourself; try to keep active on a daily basis (30 minutes of walking). If you weren't active before being pregnant don't start strenuously exercising.

### **Infections that could affect your baby:**

- Rubella
- Sexually transmitted infections
- HIV/AIDS
- Hepatitis B & C
- Herpes
- Chicken Pox
- Toxoplasmosis
- Parvovirus B19
- Group B Streptococcus

### **Travel**

- Best time to travel is between 14-28 weeks in the middle of pregnancy
- Fastest way to get to your destination is usually the best way

## **Healthy Eating, Weight Loss & Exercise**

### **Healthy Eating:**

Every diet should include proteins, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals and fat. You can get most of these nutrients from a well-balanced diet.

Most women need to be sure they get enough calcium, iron and folic acid and not too much fat (saturated and trans-fats), sodium and added sugars

### **Tips:**

- Eat a variety of foods within the food groups
- Choose fiber-rich fruits, vegetables & whole grains
- Choose some enriched grains
- Eat more dark green vegetables, orange vegetables, beans, fruits, whole grains, and non-fat milk & milk products
- Eat fewer foods with added sugars
- Eat less cholesterol
- Avoid trans fats
- Limit sodium intake
- Eat potassium rich foods
- Limit alcohol intake

### **To decrease fat intake:**

- Broil or bake instead of frying
- Skim fat from soups
- Trim all fat from meats
- Remove skin from poultry
- Cut back on butter, margarine, cream, oil and mayonnaise made from trans fat

### **Dangers of being overweight:**

- High cholesterol levels
- Diabetes
- Cardiovascular disease & high blood pressure
- Gallbladder disease
- Certain types of cancer
- Sleep apnea
- Musculoskeletal disease
- Infertility

### **Exercise & Weight Loss**

To reduce your risk of chronic disease, exercise at least 30 minutes a day. To maintain your weight, exercise a total of 60 minutes most days of the week and take in fewer calories than you burn. To sustain weight loss, exercise a total of 60-90 minutes most days of the week and take in fewer calories than you burn.

## **Cardiovascular**

Causes your heart and lungs to work harder to build fitness. Improving the fitness of your heart and lungs increases your body's ability to use oxygen. Also, it burns calories, which helps you lose weight.

Cardiovascular exercise also helps build endurance. The more endurance you have the longer you can exercise.

### **Examples of cardiovascular exercise are:**

- Swimming
- Running
- Bicycling
- Walking
- Cross-country skiing
- Aerobic activities

## **Strength Training**

Strength training, or resistance training, builds muscle and slows bone loss. Exerting force on your muscles and bones helps to strengthen them. As you build muscle your body will become more toned. The more muscle you have, the better your body burns calories.

### **Examples of strength training:**

- Lifting weights
- Using weight machines
- Using resistance bands
- Push-ups
- Leg lifts
- Squats
- Sit-ups

### **Benefits of exercise:**

- Strengthen your muscles
- Increase flexibility
- Gives you more energy
- Helps control your weight

*With the compliments of the  
Lebanese Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology*

*(Women's health promotion)*