

Obesity in pregnancy

What is it?

It is normal to gain weight during pregnancy. However, being overweight or obese before pregnancy, or putting on too much weight during pregnancy, can increase the risk of problems like:

- Miscarriage
- Stillbirth
- High blood pressure
- Pre-eclampsia (a serious condition which can cause organ damage)
- Blood clots
- Gestational diabetes
- Having a large baby

If you gain too much weight during pregnancy, you may find it hard to lose the weight after your baby is born. This can increase your risk of a range of health problems including cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

What will my GP do now?

If you are not yet pregnant your GP may:

- Recommend weight loss
- Refer you to a dietician to discuss healthy eating and lifestyle
- Request pre-pregnancy counselling with a private obstetrician

When you are pregnant, you will develop a plan to manage your weight with your GP.

Your GP may:

- Refer you to a dietitian to discuss healthy eating and lifestyle
- Provide you with a guide that explains what kind of weight gain to expect during your pregnancy

Recommended weight gain during pregnancy

Recommended weight gain for a single pregnancy based on body mass index (BMI)

- BMI 18.5: 12.5 to 18 kg
- BMI 18.5 to 24.9: 11.5 to 16 kg
- BMI 25 to 29.9: 7 to 11.5 kg
- BMI > 30: 5 to 9 kg

What will my GP do in the future?

Your GP will want to see you regularly, and more frequently than is usual, to monitor your weight and the health of your baby.

What can I do?

Avoid 'eating for two' in the first trimester, as you don't need the extra energy at this stage. Aim to eat more nutritious food, such as:

- Fresh fruit and vegetables
- Wholegrains
- Lean meats or eggs

Stick to drinking water and low-fat plain milk rather than sugary drinks. Watch your serving sizes. For example, a serving of lean meat is the size of your palm and a serve of pasta is half a cup of cooked pasta. Do some regular exercise as directed by your GP.

Obesity in Pregnancy

What questions could I ask my doctor?

- Is it safe to lose weight during pregnancy?*
- Will I lose all the weight I've put on during pregnancy?*
- Who can help me monitor my weight gain?*
- Is it safe for me to exercise?*
- How much weight gain is healthy?*
- Where can I get more support?*



What supports are available?

Public

Antenatal care is provided across the South West Sydney Local Health District. These clinics provide a range of services for pregnant women, including those with complications due to obesity in pregnancy.

- Gestational Thyroid and Endocrine Disorders Clinic: **9616 8860**
- Bankstown Antenatal Clinic: Phone: **9722 8333**
- Fairfield Hospital Antenatal Clinic: **9616 8506**
- Bowral and District Hospital Antenatal Clinic: **4861 0224**
- Liverpool Hospital Antenatal Clinic: **8738 4191**
- Camden Hospital Antenatal Clinic: **4654 6222**
- Campbelltown Hospital Antenatal Clinic: **4634 4963**

Private

You can ask your GP for a referral to a private endocrinologist or obstetrician.

Where can I learn more?

- **Australian Government** – healthy eating during your pregnancy: eatforhealth.gov.au
- **Better Health Channel** – pregnancy and diet: betterhealth.vic.gov.au
- **Pregnancy, Birth, Baby** – weight gain in pregnancy: pregnancybirthbaby.org.au

This information is to be viewed by someone who has received a diagnosis from their doctor. It is not designed to be used to diagnose a condition or as a substitute for ongoing medical care

Health Resource Directory factsheets are endorsed by South Western Sydney PHN's Community Advisory Committee and local GPs

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