



# Healthy Families Homebirth

Cheryl Furer, CPM, RM, CHom  
600 S. Airport Road, Suite G.  
Longmont, CO 80503  
cheryl.furer@msn.com  
Phone: 303-718-1554  
Fax: 720-600-4386  
www.healthyfamilieshomebirth.com

## Weight Gain during Pregnancy **Focus on what you eat; not what you gain!**

There is no normal amount to gain during pregnancy. Every woman and every pregnancy is different. Eating high quality foods will ensure that the weight you do gain is healthy for you and your baby. Pregnancy is not the time to be restricting calories, but it is the time to make smart food choices.

- Concerns about your changing body is normal. Just know that healthy weight gain is needed to grow your baby and nourish him/her after birth. As a care provider, I am open to discussion and listening to your concerns.
- At about 24- 28 weeks you will have a good weight gain spurt. This is from your expanding blood volume. Your blood volume doubles, which will help support your quickly developing baby.
- Your care provider will focus on the numbers and you focus on the food. As a midwife, I am less concerned about steady weight gain, and much more concerned if you are not gaining weight. Big jumps in weight gain could be unhealthy water retention. Be sure to note this with your care provider.
- Regular amounts of exercise will increase muscle tone and keep you in shape. Muscles weigh more than fat, plus muscles need extra calories to function effectively. Your uterus is a muscle. Just saying.
- If you do weigh yourself regularly, then remember that fluid volumes, times of the day, and amount of clothing you wear will affect the numbers.
- Speak to your care provider honestly if you have had a past history of struggling with your weight. We can work around how pounds and weight gain information is shared. There are resources such as hypnotherapy, a psychologist, or other types of therapy to help you work through these concerns.
- Get your partner on board. You can remind your partner that you are growing a healthy baby and extra curves help store energy for the baby.

Where does that weight gain go:

Increased Blood and Fluids: 8-9 lbs    Fat stores energy pockets: 4-14 lbs

Breast boost: 1-2 lbs    Placenta power: 1-2 lbs    Baby bundle: 7-9 lbs

Enlarged Uterus muscle: 2 lbs

This is general information. Please speak to your health care provider about your unique health needs.



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These numbers will change if you had less or more weight at the beginning of the pregnancy. Your metabolism and if you are carrying more than one baby factor into the amount of weight you gain. Healthy, steady weight gain is good and normal.

#### References:

- Frye, A. (2010). *Holistic Midwifery: A comprehensive textbook for midwives in homebirth practice*. Portland, OR: Labrys Press.
- Swinney, B., & Anderson, T. (1996). *Eating expectantly: a practical and tasty approach to prenatal nutrition*. Deephaven, MN: Meadowbrook Press.