Healthy Pregnancy

Five Common Myths
Heard from Expectant Mothers

1. **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.

2. **MYTH:** “I should gain the same amount as the women in my family.”
   **TRUTH:** Every pregnancy is different. What worked for your mom or abuela may not work for you. You should work with your health care provider throughout your pregnancy to be sure you gain the weight that is right for you.

3. **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.

4. **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 health care provider to determine which weight category you fall under and how much weight you should gain during your pregnancy. On average:
   - Underweight women should gain 28-40 lbs.
   - Normal weight women should gain 25-35 lbs.
   - Overweight women should gain 15-25 lbs.
   - Obese women should gain 11-20 lbs.

5. **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.

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) is an independent nonprofit organization that provides science-based health advice to policy makers and the public. In 2009, the IOM published a report that recommended how much weight women should gain during their pregnancy, whether they are underweight, normal weight, overweight, or obese before becoming pregnant.

Pregnancy Weight Gain and the Hispanic Community

Hispanic women are more likely to enter a pregnancy overweight or obese, especially if they have lived in the U.S. longer. They are also less likely to lose weight gained from a previous pregnancy.

Working with Your Health Care Provider and Your Family

The first step to a healthy pregnancy is working with your health care provider to create a customized weight gain plan for your pregnancy. But you shouldn’t do this alone. Share your weight gain plan with your family and discuss how to make traditional family dishes healthier for the health of the whole family.