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SP441-E-Smart Choices - Tips on Pregnancy - How Much Should I Gain

The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service

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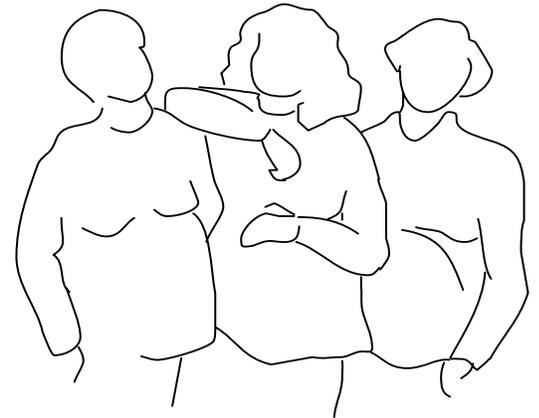
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Smart Choices...

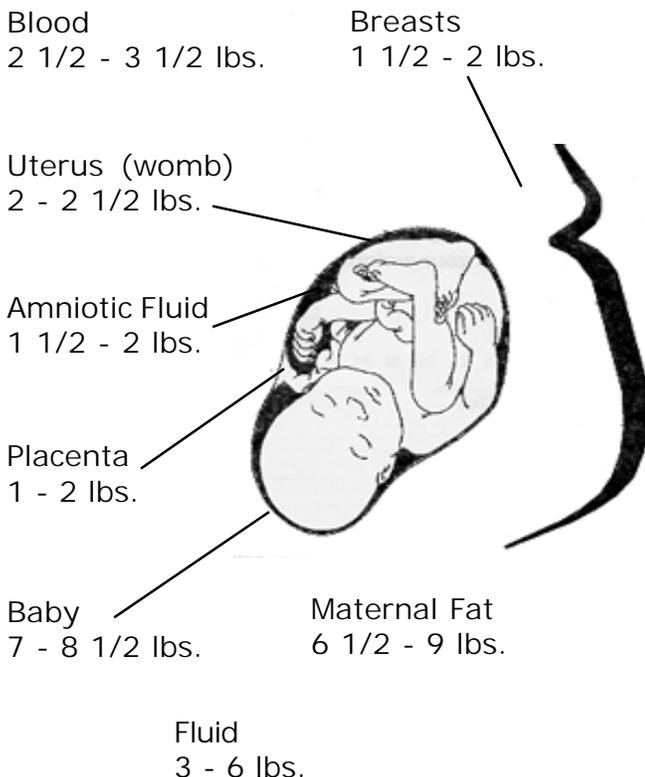
Tips on Pregnancy: How Much Should I Gain?

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The weight you gain during pregnancy helps your baby grow. The weight goes not only to the baby, but to other parts of your body.

Where does the weight go?



Why is weight gain important?

Women who do not gain enough weight may have babies who are too small. These babies could have problems with:

- ▶ breathing.
- ▶ feeding.
- ▶ behavior.
- ▶ learning.

Babies who are too small may have more illnesses and sometimes die in the first year.

How much total weight should I gain?

The amount of weight you should gain depends on your weight before pregnancy. You should gain:

- ▶ **25 to 35 pounds** - if you were a healthy weight before pregnancy.
- ▶ **28 to 40 pounds** - if you were underweight before pregnancy.
- ▶ **15 to 25 pounds** - if you were overweight before pregnancy.

How Fast Should You Gain Weight?

How much you should gain depends on:

- ▶ Your weight before you became pregnant.
- ▶ How far along you are in your pregnancy.

If you were a **healthy weight** when you became pregnant, you should gain:

- ▶ Little weight during the first three months, maybe 2 or 3 pounds.
- ▶ About a pound a week during the last six months.
- ▶ A total of 25 to 35 pounds.

If you were **underweight** when you became pregnant, you should gain:

- ▶ Some weight in the first three months, maybe 5 to 6 pounds or more. It depends on how underweight you were before pregnancy.
- ▶ A little over a pound a week during the last six months.
- ▶ A total of 28 to 40 pounds.

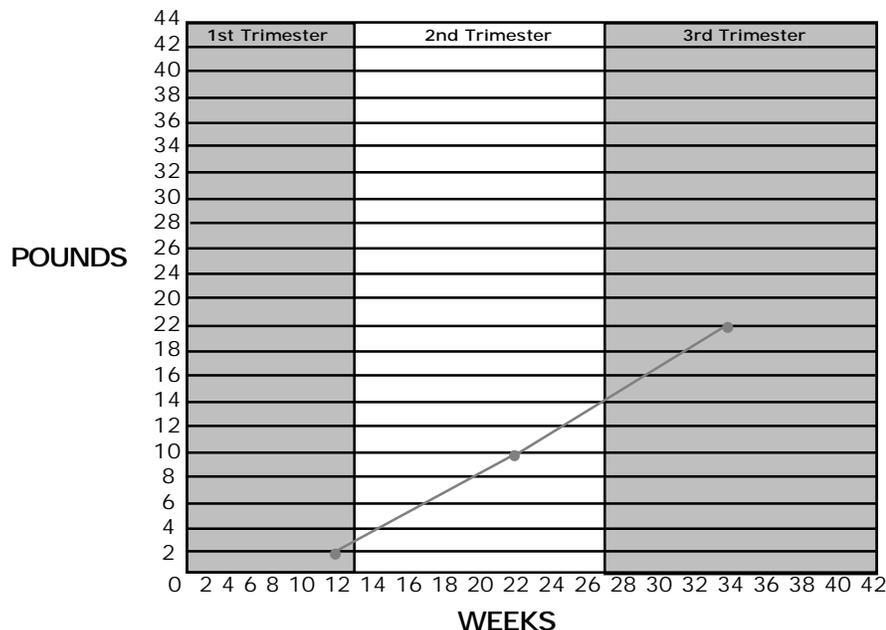
If you were **overweight** when you became pregnant, you should gain:

- ▶ Very little weight in the first three months, maybe 1 or 2 pounds. It depends on how overweight you were before pregnancy.
- ▶ A little less than a pound a week during the last six months.

Plot Your Own Weight Gain

At the bottom of the graph, find how far along you are in your pregnancy in weeks. Then find your weight gain in pounds on the left side of the graph. Place a dot where a line drawn across from pounds would meet a line drawn up from weeks. Connect the

dots to create a picture of your weight gain. For example, if you gained 2 pounds by 12 weeks, 10 pounds by 22 weeks and 22 pounds by 34 weeks, it would look like the line below.



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The Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and county governments cooperating in furtherance of May 8 and June 30, 1914.

Agricultural Extension Service, Charles Norman, Dean.