



TEACHER GUIDE

Letters from Your Unborn Baby

My Second Month



Dear MOM,

I am so happy that you care about me! The most important thing that you can do for me is to work with your doctor. I know that you want me to be healthy. We need to see the doctor, even if I am not your first baby. If you do not have a doctor yet, call the health department. The earlier you see the doctor the better!

Don't be afraid to go to the doctor. The doctor will ask questions like, "Have you ever been pregnant before?" You will also be asked if any people in your family have diseases like high blood pressure or diabetes. It is important to tell the doctor everything you know. The doctor needs to know these things. Your answers will tell a lot about your health. The doctor will ask when you had your last period. The doctor will use this date to tell you when I will be born.

The doctor will give you a check up. All the tests are important. Don't worry, nothing really hurts.

The doctor will:

Check your general health,
Weigh you,
Do blood and urine tests,
Do a pap smear and a pelvic exam,
Check your blood pressure and pulse, and
Check my heart beat.

The doctor will give you a card to remind you of your next visit. Don't forget to go, Mom. I want everything to be easy for you. If you can't go, call the doctor to make another appointment.

ABOUT ME

My head is much larger than the rest of my body. My arms and legs are beginning to form. I am 1-inch long and I weigh about 1/3 ounce. A group of cells have formed the placenta. The placenta connects me to your bloodstream. That's how I get oxygen and food.

So Mom -- Be Careful What You Eat and Drink!

ABOUT YOU

You may start to see changes in your body. Your breasts might feel heavy and tender. Your breasts will probably swell and your nipples may get larger and darker. Your body is making changes so that I can breastfeed. You may feel happy and sad all at the same time. Motherhood is a big change and a new responsibility for you. It is all right if you are nervous about our lives together. Talk to other mothers about the pleasures and pains of having a baby.

GAINING WEIGHT

Can you weigh yourself on a scale? You need to gain weight while you are pregnant with me. It helps me grow. Gaining weight is normal and very important during pregnancy. This weight gain is temporary. I can have problems if you do not gain enough weight.

How much you weighed before you were pregnant with me will help you decide how much weight you need to gain to make sure I am born healthy. Look at the chart below and see what the best weight gain is for us both.

| PRE-PREGNANCY WEIGHT | YOU SHOULD GAIN |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| UNDERWEIGHT | 28-40 pounds |
| NORMAL | 25-35 pounds |
| OVERWEIGHT | 15-25 pounds |

If you gain the right amount of weight for you and you gain this weight at a slow steady pace you will have the best chance for a healthy delivery. I want to weigh at least 7 pounds or more when I am born. Babies born too early, or too small, (less than 5 1/2 pounds) sometimes have one or more problems.

If you are underweight, it is very important to gain at least 28 pounds so that I am not a low birth weight baby. Low birth weight babies weigh less than 5 1/2 pounds when they are born. These babies need more medical care than healthy, normal sized babies.

If you are overweight, make nutritious food choices that provide proper nourishment. Limit foods that are empty calories. Remember, babies need nourishment during pregnancy. Now is not the time to lose weight, you could starve your baby. Talk with your doctor or nutritionist to help you lose weight after I am born.

What foods would you choose for a healthful breakfast?

SAMPLE BREAKFAST FOODS

| | | |
|----------------------------|----------------|-----------|
| 1 cup fortified hot cereal | GRAIN GROUP | Go Food |
| 1 hard cooked egg | PROTEIN GROUP | Grow Food |
| 1 cup tomato juice | VEGETABLE | Glow Food |
| 1 cup skim milk | DAIRY GROUP | Grow Food |
| 1 small doughnut | EMPTY CALORIES | |

All these foods, except the doughnut, are nutrient-rich foods. The doughnut is an empty-calorie food so it doesn't count as a bread or cereal GO FOOD. Toast or an English muffin would be a better choice.

Breakfast Cookies

Yield: 24 cookies

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 3/4 cup all-purpose flour | 1 egg |
| 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon (optional) | 1 teaspoon vanilla flavoring |
| 1/2 teaspoon baking powder | 1 medium apple, chopped |
| 1/2 teaspoon salt | 1 1/2 cups oatmeal, uncooked |
| 1/2 cup butter or margarine, softened | 1 cup shredded Colby or cheddar cheese |
| 1/3 cup brown sugar | 3/4 cup raisins |

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Mix together flour, cinnamon, baking powder, and salt. Stir in butter, brown sugar, egg and vanilla flavoring. Add apple, oatmeal, cheese and raisins. Place large spoonfuls on ungreased cookie sheet. Bake at 375 degrees for 15 minutes. Store in a covered container in refrigerator.

Creamy Apple Oatmeal

Yield: 6 servings

| | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 1/2 cups oatmeal, uncooked | 1 apple |
| 3 cups water | 1 teaspoon cinnamon |
| 2/3 cup instant nonfat dry milk | 3 Tablespoons sugar or |
| 1/4 cup raisins | 2 Tablespoons honey |

In large bowl mix oatmeal, water, nonfat dry milk, and raisins. Allow mixture to soak for a few minutes. Overnight is even better. (If you soak mixture overnight, put the bowl in refrigerator.) The next morning or when you are ready to cook, grate or chop the apple into small pieces. Put oatmeal mixture into large saucepan and bring to a boil. Cook 2 minutes and remove from heat. Stir in chopped apple, cinnamon, and honey or sugar. Do not feed honey to children under one year of age.

MyPyramid Plan Plus

It is generally recommended women of normal weight before pregnancy eat about 300 additional calories a day while pregnant. If you are underweight or overweight consult with your doctor about your daily calorie intake so you can meet your weight gain goal discussed by you and your doctor. Choose healthful foods and that includes those extra calories needed during your pregnancy. Extra-calories should be nutrient-rich foods like skim milk, chicken, broccoli, banana that are packed with nutrients (carbohydrates, fats, protein, vitamins, minerals, water) important for maintaining a healthy body. Stay away from foods described as “empty calories”. Foods like cookies, soda, candy, cake are high in calories and low in nutrients. Read food labels for calorie content and serving size. The more natural, unprocessed foods are your best bet. For example: Milk vs. chocolate milk; 100% fruit juice vs. fruit drink; cheese cubes vs. breaded cheese sticks; broiled chicken vs. chicken nuggets.

Examples of nutrient-rich foods that equal about 300 calories:

- 1 oz. cereal + 1 cup skim milk + apple or banana
- 2 oz. turkey* + 2 slices whole wheat bread + lettuce + tomato slice
- 1 medium baked potato + 1 oz. low fat cheese + 1/2 cup broccoli

* **Caution:** Hot dogs and luncheon meats should be reheated until steaming hot to reduce your risk of getting listeriosis which is a bacteria infection that can be harmful to mother and unborn baby.

LOW BIRTH WEIGHT BABIES

Low birth weight babies have a greater chance of having:

- physical handicaps,
- mental retardation,
- low IQs,
- more colds and infections,
- hearing and sight problems, and
- sensitivity to stress.

Mothers who smoke, drink alcohol, take drugs, eat poorly, or have poor prenatal care tend to have low birth weight babies. You can improve my chances of being healthy by taking good care of yourself while you are pregnant.

AVOID TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, AND DRUGS

Please don't smoke, drink, or take drugs while you are pregnant with me. These habits can hurt your body, and are really dangerous to me since I am so small.

CIGARETTE SMOKING

When you smoke, you put me in danger. Try to quit while you are pregnant with me. Remember every time you have a cigarette, so do I. If someone you live with smokes, ask them not to smoke around us. Second hand smoke is dangerous, too.

DRINKING ALCOHOL

Drinking beer, wine and mixed drinks can hurt me. When you drink, I drink. I think I'm way too young for beer, wine and mixed drinks. If you drink a lot, I can have many problems that will last my whole life. Please don't drink while you are pregnant with me.

ILLEGAL DRUGS

DO NOT take recreational drugs because they are very bad for me. If you are using street drugs, stop now. See a doctor to get support and help. Even if you use drugs only once in a while, you can harm me. Ask your doctor before taking prescription drugs or any over the counter drugs. Certain drugs may slow my brain growth and damage my brain.

It is all right to tell a doctor that you want help if you smoke, drink or take drugs. Remember, I am growing inside you and I want to be healthy.

Thanks for caring about me mom. We are going to be happy and healthy together.

**Love,
Your Baby**

M. Lafont, MS, RD, L. Mangione, K. Chapman-Novakofski, RD, PhD, & R. Orr, PhD, University of Illinois, 1996; revised 2006



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