

NUTRITION IN PREGNANCY

Findings from the **CANDLE** Study

WHY IS NUTRITION IMPORTANT?

Nutrition during pregnancy is important for both mom and baby! Eating nutritious foods will ensure that mom's body has the fuel it needs to support baby's growth, and some essential nutrients play a key role in baby's development. See below for a few examples of important nutrients for a healthy pregnancy and baby!

- **Folic Acid** – helps prevent birth defects of the brain and spine
- **Iron** – helps red blood cells deliver oxygen
- **Choline** – helps development of baby's brain and spine
- **Calcium** – helps baby build strong bones

For more information visit:
acog.org/womens-health/faqs/nutrition-during-pregnancy



CANDLE STUDY FINDINGS

Vitamin D levels during pregnancy and children's language development

- Moms' levels of Vitamin D predict their children's language development.
- More Vitamin D helps kids better understand language spoken to them.

This study found that Vitamin D levels during pregnancy played a role in children's language development by helping them better receive or understand language spoken to them. Vitamin D levels during pregnancy did not play a role in helping their children better express themselves through language. Many other things also play a role, along with moms' Vitamin D levels, in children's language development.

Maternal Diet during pregnancy and children's growth and risk for obesity

- Moms' diet during pregnancy predicts their children's growth.
- A specific pattern of eating during pregnancy increases children's risk of rapid weight gain and obesity.

This study found that a specific pattern of eating during pregnancy that includes fried meats, fruit juices, sugar sweetened beverages, and mayonnaise was associated with an increased risk for rapid weight gain in early childhood, as well as overweight and obesity at age four.

FOR MORE INFORMATION – This brochure is for educational purposes only. Please contact your doctor or other healthcare provider with questions about the contents of this brochure and before making any changes. If you are a healthcare provider or community organization interested in distributing our research findings, please contact Lauren Sims Taylor, PhD, MPH at lsims3@uthsc.edu.

BARRIERS

There are many barriers to maintaining adequate nutrition during pregnancy.

- physical – morning sickness, food aversions
- financial – healthy foods and prenatal vitamins are expensive
- social – inadequate access to grocery stores

GETTING HELP

WIC – the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children provides healthy supplemental foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and referrals to other health, welfare, and community-based services.

Shelby County Main WIC office:
901.222.9980

tn.gov/health/health-program-areas/fhw/wic.html

SNAP – the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (food stamps) provides nutritional assistance benefits to children and families, the elderly, and the disabled.

Shelby County Family Assistance Office: 901.320.7200

tn.gov/humanservices/for-families/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap.html

Talk to your doctor about treatments for morning sickness.
Talk to your doctor about prescription prenatals (which may make them more affordable)

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