



# HEALTHFUL TIPS

## Pregnancy after Bariatric Surgery

**M**any women will decide to have children after having bariatric surgery. We're learning more and more about how much the mother's food choices and health during pregnancy impact her children throughout their lives. Studies are just beginning to look at the relationships between pregnancy and bariatric surgery. So far, the good news is that weight loss has health benefits for both the mother and child. For mom, there is less risk of gestational diabetes, preeclampsia, high blood pressure and caesarean delivery. The child may benefit from a broken obesity cycle with decreased risks for both childhood and adult obesity.

This article has basic information that can help you make healthful choices before and during your pregnancy. Follow the specific recommendations of your obstetrician who will direct your care based upon your individual needs.

**Timing is everything.** Most surgeons recommend that you wait to become pregnant until you have reached a stable weight—at least a year (or two) after bariatric surgery. It is more difficult to meet the nutritional needs of the developing

fetus before that time. Keep in mind that weight loss often increases fertility so even those who thought they couldn't get pregnant should take precautions.

**Pregnancy is not the time to give in to all your junk food urges.** Instead, eat a variety of healthy foods. Newer studies are finding that babies and children prefer the types of foods their mothers ate while pregnant. If you want your child to prefer healthy foods, eat healthy foods while pregnant.

**Plan ahead.** Take vitamin and mineral supplements as recommended from day one of your surgery. Have lab tests taken as recommended. Before becoming pregnant, your physician may want to consider a more extensive lab panel including all fat soluble vitamins (A, D, E, K), folic acid, thiamin, vitamin B-12, an iron panel, albumin, and pre-albumin in addition to standard prenatal labs.

Speaking of lab tests, a glucose tolerance test which is used to test for gestational diabetes may cause dumping syndrome if you have had a gastric bypass. Your physician may opt to use a test called A1C and a fasting blood sugar followed by a 2 hour post-prandial blood sugar test instead.

Weight gain recommendations are not typically different for post-bariatric surgery patients. A normal-weight mom is usually given a 25-35# weight gain range. An overweight

mom is usually given a 15-25# weight gain range.

**General nutrition recommendations (keep in mind that your individual needs may be different):**

---

65-90 grams of protein (protein supplements may be helpful)

---

5-6 small meals (about ¾ cup of food)

---

25% of meals should consist of healthy carbs (fresh veggies, fresh fruits, whole grains)

---

25 grams of healthy fats per day

---

At least 64 oz of water daily

---

Prenatal vitamin supplements as recommended

---

1500 mg calcium citrate

---

Vitamin D-3 as recommended based upon lab tests

---

Sublingual vitamin B-12 (500 mcg daily or more if lab tests indicate a greater need)

---

Adequate fiber from food or supplement sources

---

Flaxseed or fatty fish as a source of Omega 3 fatty acids

---

Thiamin supplement may be needed if excessive nausea/vomiting or if lab tests indicate, otherwise food and supplements should be adequate

---