Module - Healthy Weight Gain During Pregnancy

Time:
15-30 Minutes

WIC Status:
Any Pregnant Status

Learning Objectives:
Participants will:
1. Describe the importance of gaining the appropriate amount of weight during pregnancy.
2. Understand the target range of weight gain based on their pre pregnancy weight.

Handouts and Materials:
- Handouts:
    - Kentucky Prenatal Nutrition Guide First Trimester
    - Kentucky Prenatal Nutrition Guide Second Trimester
    - Kentucky Prenatal Nutrition Guide Third Trimester
    - Weight Gain During Pregnancy
- Poster:
    - Timeline of Pregnancy Chart (Optional)

Facilitating WIC Discussion Group Concepts:
- Providing participants with a more meaningful nutrition education experience that involves interactive learning.
- As the certifying health professional, you will be the facilitator and moderate a group conversation-style discussion.
- Encourage all participants to participate but recognize that some participants may prefer not to speak in a group setting. If the participant cannot answer, chooses not to answer, or has a negative response, you may respond with a statement such as "Trying something new is not always easy."
- It is important to establish "ground rules" for the group. For example:
    - Set the time, agenda, and the length of session
    - Establish rules on confidentiality and sharing of group responsibilities.
    - Clarify procedural issues, especially listening to, respecting ideas or comments and allowing time and opportunity for others in the group to share.

Outline - Healthy Weight Gain During Pregnancy

Icebreaker:
Have participant introduce themselves and state their due date. (Optional)

Facilitated Discussion Topic Opening Questions:
Ask one of the following questions to facilitate discussion:
- *What have you heard about how much weight a woman should gain when pregnant?*
- *Why do women need to gain weight during pregnancy?*

Discussion Topics: (Optional: Refer to Timeline of Pregnancy Poster during discussion.)
Introduction

Weight gain is a healthy part of pregnancy. A woman who was average weight before getting pregnant should gain 25 to 35 pounds after becoming pregnant. Underweight women should gain 28 to 40 pounds. And overweight women may need to gain only 15 to 25 pounds during pregnancy.

In general, you should gain about 2 to 4 pounds during the first three months you're pregnant and 1 pound a week during the rest of your pregnancy.

If you are expecting twins you should gain 35 to 45 pounds during your pregnancy. This would be an average of 1 ½ pounds per week after the usual weight gain in the first three months. When carrying twins, you may need between 3,000 and 3,500 calories a day. It's especially important to gain the right amount of weight when you're expecting twins because your weight affects the babies' weight. And because twins are often born before the due date, a higher birth weight is important for their health.

Is It Safe to Lose Weight When Pregnant?

Women should not **try** to lose weight or diet during pregnancy unless she is under her doctor's care. Some women experience weight loss during the pregnancy due to morning sickness. Your doctor and dietitian can work with you if you are losing too much weight.

How to Gain the Right Amount of Weight During Pregnancy
Try these tips:
- Eat five to six small meals every day.
- Keep quick, easy snacks on hand, such as nuts, raisins, cheese and crackers, dried fruit, and ice cream or yogurt.
- Spread peanut butter on toast, crackers, apples, bananas, or celery. One tablespoon of creamy peanut butter gives you about 100 calories and 7 grams of protein.

- If you are having a hard time gaining weight, try adding nonfat powdered milk to mashed potatoes, scrambled eggs, and hot cereal. You can also try adding extras to your meal, such as butter or margarine, cream cheese, gravy, sour cream, and cheese.

What if You Gain Too Much Weight During Pregnancy?

If you have gained more weight than your doctor recommended, talk to your doctor about it. In most cases, you'll want to wait until after delivery to lose weight.

Here are some tips to slow your weight gain:
- When eating fast food, choose lower-fat items such as a broiled chicken breast sandwich with tomato and lettuce (no sauce or mayonnaise), side salad with low-fat dressing, plain bagels, or a plain baked potato. Avoid foods such as French fries, mozzarella sticks, or breaded chicken patties.
- Avoid whole milk products. You need at least four servings of milk products every day. However, using skim, 1%, or 2% milk will greatly reduce the amount of calories and fat you eat. Also, choose low-fat or fat-free cheese or yogurt.
- Limit sweet or sugary drinks. Sweetened drinks such as soft drinks, fruit punch, fruit drinks, iced tea, lemonade, or powdered drink mixes have lots of empty calories. Choose water, club soda, or mineral water to skip extra calories.
- Avoid adding salt to foods when cooking. Salt causes you to retain water.
- Limit sweets and high-calorie snacks. Cookies, candies, donuts, cakes, syrup, honey, and potato chips have a lot of calories and little nutrition. Try not to eat these foods every day. Instead, try fresh fruit, low-fat yogurt, angel food cake with strawberries, or pretzels as lower-calorie snack and dessert choices.
- Use fats in moderation. Fats include cooking oils, margarine, butter, gravy, sauces, mayonnaise, regular salad dressings, lard, sour cream, and cream cheese. Try the lower-fat alternatives of these products.
- Cook food the healthy way. Frying foods in oil or butter will add calories and fat. Baking, broiling, grilling, and boiling are healthier preparation methods.
- Exercise. Moderate exercise can help burn excess calories. Walking or swimming is usually safe for pregnant women. Ask your health care provider what exercise would be right for you before getting started.

Summary:

Gaining a healthy amount of weight during pregnancy is good for both you and the baby. Gaining enough weight helps the baby to grow strong and healthy. Not gaining too much weight helps you get back to your normal weight after the baby is born.

Closing Activity/Questions:

Ask one of the following questions to conclude today's discussion.

- *What did you find most interesting about today's topic?*
- *Was there something you heard today that you haven't heard before?*
- *What is one thing you can try to help you gain a healthy amount of weight while you are pregnant?*

References:

- Health and Nutrition Information for Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women, Choose My Plate site: http://www.choosemyplate.gov/pregnancy-breastfeeding.html
- Your Pregnancy and Childbirth: Month to Month, 5th Ed. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, 2010, Washington, DC.
- CDC's Pediatric and Nutrition Surveillance System site: http://www.cdc.gov/pednss/
- WEB MD WEB site: http://www.webmd.com/baby/guide/healthy-weight-gain

Resources:

- The following materials may be ordered from the pamphlet library or accessed at the Kentucky Cabinet of Health and Family Services Nutrition Services Branch Nutrition Education Materials website http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/mch/ns/Nutrition+Education+Materials.htm or direct links:
  - Kentucky Prenatal Nutrition Guide First Trimester http://chfs.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/D780AE68-2C75-4167-ADCE-601C5ABA60B4/0/FirstTrimesterKYPrenatalGuiderev92011.pdf
  - Kentucky Prenatal Nutrition Guide Second Trimester http://chfs.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/BB61CF77-E4A7-4853-A9A7-52B5DF598206/0/SecondTrimesterKYPrenatalGuiderev92011.pdf
  - Kentucky Prenatal Nutrition Guide Third Trimester http://chfs.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/F0C222DA-091A-4C19-9B1A-269EFF6AD4B0/0/ThirdTrimesterKYPrenatalGuiderev9302011.pdf
  - Weight Gain During Pregnancy http://chfs.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/3EEF73BC-F01D-45D1-82FD-7F53D0375DDD/0/weightgainduringpregnancy.pdf
- Timeline of Pregnancy Chart (24" x 18" laminated poster) may be found at: Childbirth Graphics http://www.childbirthgraphics.com/index.php/timeline-of-pregnancy-chart.html or Health Edco http://www.healthedco.com/index.php/timeline-of-pregnancy-chart.html