Caring for Your Twin Pregnancy

Carrying twins is exciting, and it also means your pregnancy needs closer attention than a pregnancy with one baby. Twins have a higher chance of certain problems, but regular prenatal care, good nutrition and knowing the warning signs go a long way toward keeping you and your babies healthy.

Your Prenatal Care

You will have more frequent visits and ultrasounds than someone carrying one baby. Early on, your care team will find out whether your twins share one placenta or each have their own. This decides how often you need ultrasounds.

- If each twin has its own placenta, growth ultrasounds are usually done about every 4 weeks.
- If your twins share one placenta, you will need ultrasounds more often — usually every 2 weeks starting around 16 weeks — to watch for problems that only happen with a shared placenta.
- Testing to check how your babies are doing (like non-stress tests or biophysical profile tests) often starts around 32 weeks, sometimes earlier depending on your situation.

Keep every appointment. These visits catch problems early, when they are easiest to treat.

Eating Well for Twins

You are feeding two babies, so your body needs more calories, protein and nutrients than with one baby. Focus on foods packed with nutrition rather than empty calories.

You will likely need several hundred extra calories a day compared to a single pregnancy, especially in the second and third trimester. Your clinician or a dietitian can give you a target based on your starting weight.

- Eat some protein at every meal — eggs, dairy, lean meat, poultry, fish, beans, lentils, nuts or tofu.
- Choose carbs that release energy slowly, like whole grains, vegetables, fruits and legumes. This helps keep blood sugar steady, which matters because twins raise the risk of gestational diabetes.
- Include healthy fats, including omega-3s. Low-mercury fish (salmon, canned light tuna or herring) 2–3 times a week is one good source, or ask about a DHA supplement.
- Drink water throughout the day.

Vitamins and Supplements

Twin pregnancies often need more than a standard prenatal vitamin. Don't start any supplement on your own — check doses with your clinician first. Commonly recommended nutrients include:

- A prenatal vitamin with at least 1 mg of folic acid, every day
- Iron 60 mg to prevent or treat anemia (low blood count)
- Calcium 2,500 mg and vitamin D 1,000 international units
- Magnesium 800 mg and zinc 30 mg
- DHA (omega-3) 300-500 mg

Gaining the Right Amount of Weight

Gaining the right amount of weight helps your babies grow well and lowers the chance of early birth. How much depends on your weight before pregnancy. For many women who started at a normal weight, this is roughly 37 to 54 pounds total. If you started overweight or obese, less weight gain is recommended. Your care team will set a personal goal and track it with you. Gaining either too little or too much can cause problems, so aim for steady, gradual weight gain.

Aspirin to Lower Your Risk of Preeclampsia

About 1 in every 5 women (20%) with twin pregnancy develops preeclampsia, a serious condition of high blood pressure and other problems. Low-dose aspirin lowers the risk of preeclampsia. Aspirin should be started between 12 and 28 weeks — ideally before 16 weeks.
Daily low-dose aspirin during pregnancy is considered safe.

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Staying Active

For an uncomplicated twin pregnancy, staying gently active is healthier than lying in bed. Strict bed rest is not recommended — it doesn't prevent early birth and can raise your risk of blood clots and muscle loss. Ask your clinician what level of activity fits your situation, and follow any specific instructions if complications come up.

Warning Signs — Call Right Away

Twin pregnancies carry a higher chance of high blood pressure, preeclampsia, gestational diabetes, low blood count and early labor. Your team will screen for these regularly. Contact your clinician right away or seek urgent care if you notice:

- Regular contractions or tightening, low back pressure or a change in vaginal discharge or fluid leaking before your due date (possible signs of early labor)
- A severe or ongoing headache, vision changes like spots or blurriness, swelling of your face or hands or pain in your upper belly (possible signs of preeclampsia)
- Vaginal bleeding
- A decrease in your babies' movements
- Severe or constant nausea and vomiting that keeps you from keeping food or fluids down

Planning for Delivery

Twins are often born earlier than single babies. Twins are delivered a few weeks before the due date, but the exact timing and delivery method depend on the type of twins, their positions and your health. Your care team will build a plan with you as your pregnancy moves along.

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