

### Overview

Health care provider advice about weight gain during pregnancy matters. Too much weight gain during pregnancy may increase the risk of complications for the mother and the infant. Unfortunately, about half of all pregnant women gain more weight than recommended. This is particularly true for poor women and women from racial/ethnic minority groups. Research has found that health care provider advice plays an important role in patients deciding to change their behaviors.

### Main Questions

The researchers wanted to answer these questions:

- What percentage of pregnant women receive advice from their health care providers regarding how much weight they should gain?
- What percentage of pregnant women follow their provider's advice regarding how much weight to gain?
- Is there an association between health care provider advice and weight gain during pregnancy?



### Study

Using baseline data from the Pregnancy and Postpartum Observational Dietary Study (PPODS), this study examined health care and the relationship between advice about weight gain during pregnancy and actual pregnancy weight gain. The PPODS study is a prospective cohort study that followed 110 women through their pregnancy. This study analyzed data from 91 baseline surveys, which were administered at 28-34 weeks of gestation.

### The Bottom Line

When health care providers give advice about pregnancy weight gain and this advice is followed, women are more likely to gain a healthy amount of weight during pregnancy. Pregnant women may benefit from their health care provider's advice regarding how much weight to gain during pregnancy. However, not all women receive advice and only about half of women who receive advice follow the advice.

### Source

Lopez-Cepero A, Leung K, Moore Simas T, Rosal MC. Association Between Obstetric Provider's Advice and Gestational Weight Gain. *Matern Child Health J.* 2018 Feb 15. doi: 10.1007/s10995-018-2497-y.

### Contact

Milagros C. Rosal, PhD | Division of Preventive and Behavioral Medicine | University of Massachusetts Medical School  
E-mail: [Milagros.Rosal@umassmed.edu](mailto:Milagros.Rosal@umassmed.edu)

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### Spotlight on Results

- About two-thirds (67%) of the study participants received advice on how much weight to gain during pregnancy.
- Among the women who received the advice, about half (54.1%) followed the advice. These women gained, on average 11 lbs less than women who did not report following the advice.
- Women who reported following their provider's advice were 82% less likely to gain too much weight.

### Call for Action

Strategies to both encourage health care providers to counsel women on weight gain during pregnancy, and to encourage women to follow this advice are needed to lower the risk of excessive weight gain during pregnancy are needed.