

Nutrition referrals during pregnancy

Proper nutrition during pregnancy is vital to the baby's growth and development and the mother's health. **Aetna Better Health® of Illinois encourages providers to refer members to a nutritionist to support a healthy pregnancy.**

Make nutrition referrals as early as possible in pregnancy to support good health.



Nutritionists provide support such as:

- Individual counseling and guidance
- Emotional well-being support
- Weight monitoring and education about risks of excessive weight gain
- Promotion of physical activity

Nutrition referrals help members make healthier food choices, leading to improved health for both mother and baby.

Benefits of nutrition referrals

- **Personalized recommendations:** A nutritionist can assess dietary habits and make recommendations to ensure nutrition requirements are met.
- **Gestational weight gain management:** Nutritionists can help pregnant members maintain a healthy weight by providing guidance on appropriate caloric intake and physical activity level.
- **Managing specific conditions or dietary restrictions:** Pre-existing conditions such as diabetes or hypertension require careful monitoring and dietary modifications during pregnancy. Additionally, dietary restrictions such as vegetarian and vegan diets need to be properly balanced to ensure all necessary nutrients are received.
- **Common pregnancy discomforts and concerns:** Nutritionists can suggest dietary modifications and strategies to relieve discomforts caused by nausea, constipation, heartburn and food aversions. They can also offer advice on managing cravings and making healthy food choices.

Other ways to support members during pregnancy

- ✓ Talk to members about temporary food assistance offered through the **GA Foods Assistance Program**.
- ✓ Assist members with enrolling in the **WIC** program.
- ✓ Encourage members to keep track of their weight during pregnancy. Aetna Better Health® of Illinois members receive a monthly **\$25 over the counter (OTC) benefit** that can be used towards the purchase of a scale.
- ✓ Refer members to the Aetna Better Health **Maternity Matters** team.



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