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| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Instructions For<br/>Assessment of Prenatal Weight Gain</b></p> |
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## 1. Find the Woman's Weight Category

- Measure her height without shoes.
- Ask the woman her weight before pregnancy (*known as pre-pregnancy weight*). If she does not know her pre-pregnancy weight, refer to health care provider and /or calculate the pre-pregnancy weight (see separate instructions).
- Find the woman's height on Table 1 and follow across the row to find her pre-pregnancy weight.
- The title of the column with her pre-pregnancy weight tells you her **weight category** and also the woman's "Body Mass Index" (**BMI**) range.

**Example:**

A woman is 5 feet 2 inches tall. She weighed 145 pounds before pregnancy. Her **weight category** is Overweight . . . Her **BMI range** = 25-29.9.

## 2. Find the Recommended Range and Rate of Weight Gain

- Find the Recommended Weight Gain Range for her weight category on Table 2.
- Research has shown that there is insufficient data to recommend rate of weight gain for the 1<sup>st</sup> trimester.
- Find the recommended 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> trimester rate of gain per month for her weight category.

**Example:**

An Overweight woman should gain 15 to 25 pounds.

A weight gain of 2 pounds per month is recommended during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester.

## 3. Find the Right Weight Gain Grid

- The weight gain grid is a tool that helps you see if the woman is gaining within the recommended range.
- Choose the grid that matches her weight category. *There are **four** weight gain grids:* Underweight, Normal Weight, Overweight, and Obese. Document the pre-pregnancy weight and height on the correct grid.
- **The Weight Gain Grid:**
  - The *horizontal zero line* starts at conception.
  - The *vertical zero line* represents the woman's weight before pregnancy.
  - Each horizontal line above the zero represents one pound *gained*.
  - Each horizontal line below the zero represents one pound *lost*.
  - Each vertical line represents one more week into the pregnancy (gestational age).

#### 4. Plot the Weight Gain Grid

- **Note:** Record the woman's pre-pregnancy weight on the appropriate weight grid.
- If she does not know her pre-pregnancy weight, document the weight that was estimated or calculated.
- Take the woman's weight today and subtract it from her pre-pregnant weight. This number equals the number of pounds she has gained (+) or lost (-).

**Example:**

A woman, 5 feet 2 inches weighed 145 pounds before pregnancy.

At 18 weeks gestation she weighs 151 pounds (lbs).

$$(151 \text{ lbs.} - 145 \text{ lbs.} = 6 \text{ lbs.})$$

**She gained 6 lbs.**

- Find the line that marks her weight change and the line that marks the number of weeks of gestation.
- Mark an **X** where these two lines meet.
- Check to see whether her total weight gain at this visit falls within her target weight gain range. In this example she is within the range for overweight women.
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- Plot weight gain at **each prenatal** visit. **Always subtract the pre-pregnant weight from today's weight.**
- Show the woman where her weight is on the grid. Discuss her weight gain progress.

#### 5. What the Weight Gain Grid Tells You

- The weight gain grid can tell you if the woman is gaining too fast, too slow, or just right. The pattern of weight gain is as important as the total gain.
- The grid is also a screening tool to identify women who need more in-depth assessment and counseling.
- When a woman's gain is outside the recommended range, assess factors that may affect her weight gain. See "*Low Weight Gain*" and "*High Weight Gain*" in the Nutrition section of Steps to Take Guidelines.

Some women may not follow the curves of the Weight Gain Grid or may be four or five pounds above or below the recommended line even though they are eating a nutritious diet. Other women may be eating too little or too much. It is important to find out what the woman is eating. Follow the guidelines for the Perinatal Food Frequency Questionnaire (PFFQ).

(A 24-hour food recall is also an acceptable dietary assessment tool, but is not recommended unless the assessor has received adequate training.)

## Steps to Take for Appropriate Weight Gain

- **If the woman is gaining above or below the recommended range, complete the Perinatal Food Frequency Questionnaire (or 24-Hour Food Recall) monthly.**

Emphasize the Daily Food Guide for Pregnancy whether or not the pregnancy weight gain fits the recommended weight gain grid.

- **If she is not eating enough or eating too much** in any of the food groups, discuss with the woman the changes she needs to make in her diet.

Make a plan together that will bring about positive changes.

- **If her weight gain is within the recommended range**, assess her diet.

If her diet is fine, congratulate the woman and encourage her to continue eating well.

Review her diet intake each month and her weight at **each prenatal** visit.

- **If her weight gain is below the recommended range**, review “*Low Weight Gain*” in the Nutrition section of Steps to Take Guidelines.

Even if the woman is not eating enough of certain foods, look for other factors which may also explain the low weight gain.

- **If her weight gain is above the recommended range**, review “*High Weight Gain*” in the Nutrition section of Steps to Take Guidelines.

Do not restrict the diets of women who are gaining extra weight when they consume low fat foods within the recommended number of food groups.

Even if the woman is eating too much of certain foods, look for other factors which may also explain her excess weight gain.

- **Continue to monitor weight gain at each prenatal visit.**

### Reference:

Adapted from Steps to Take, Comprehensive Perinatal Services Program – Program Guidelines for Enhanced Health Education, Nutrition, and Psychosocial Services, Steps to Take Guidelines, 1997 Edition, CDHS.

**Table 1: Weight Categories for Women According to Height and Pre pregnancy Weight \***

| Height | Under Weight<br>(BMI - < 18.5) | Normal Weight<br>( BMI 18.5 – 24.9 ) | OverWeight<br>(BMI 25-29.9) | Obese Weight<br>( ≥ 30 ) |
|--------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 4' 7"  | < 80                           | 80 -107                              | 108-128                     | >128                     |
| 4' 8"  | < 83                           | 83 -111                              | 112-133                     | >133                     |
| 4' 9"  | < 86                           | 86 -115                              | 116-138                     | >138                     |
| 4' 10" | < 89                           | 89 -119                              | 120-143                     | >143                     |
| 4' 11  | < 92                           | 92 -123                              | 124-148                     | >148                     |
| 5' 0"  | < 95                           | 95 -127                              | 128-153                     | >153                     |
| 5' 1"  | < 98                           | 98 -132                              | 133-158                     | >158                     |
| 5' 2"  | <101                           | 101-136                              | 137-163                     | >163                     |
| 5' 3"  | <105                           | 105-140                              | 141-169                     | >169                     |
| 5' 4"  | <108                           | 108-145                              | 146-174                     | >174                     |
| 5' 5"  | <111                           | 111-149                              | 150-179                     | >179                     |
| 5' 6"  | <115                           | 115-154                              | 155-185                     | >185                     |
| 5' 7"  | <118                           | 118-159                              | 160-191                     | >191                     |
| 5' 8"  | <122                           | 122-164                              | 165-196                     | >196                     |
| 5' 9"  | <125                           | 125-168                              | 169-202                     | >202                     |
| 5' 10" | <129                           | 129-173                              | 174-208                     | >208                     |
| 5' 11" | <133                           | 133-178                              | 179-214                     | >214                     |
| 6' 0"  | <137                           | 137-183                              | 184-220                     | >220                     |
| 6' 1"  | <140                           | 140-189                              | 190-227                     | >227                     |
| 6' 2"  | <143                           | 143-194                              | 195-233                     | >233                     |
| 6' 3"  | <148                           | 149-199                              | 200-239                     | >239                     |

**Table 2: Recommended Range and Rate of Weight Gain**

| * Recommended<br>- Weight Gain Range<br>Twins                               | <u>Underweight</u><br>28 - 40 lbs.<br>N / A | <u>Normal Weight</u><br>25 - 35 lbs.<br>37-54 lbs. | <u>Overweight</u><br>15 – 25 lbs.<br>31-50 lbs | <u>Obese</u><br>11 – 20<br>25-42 lbs. |
|---|---|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| ** Recommended Rate<br>of Weight Gain /mo.<br>*** 1 <sup>st</sup> Trimester | -----                                       | -----  | -----  | -----                                 |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> /3 <sup>rd</sup> Trimester                                  | 4lbs.ormore                                 | 3-4 lbs.   | about 2 lbs.                                   | varies                                |

\* - IOM, 2009. Weight Gain During Pregnancy: Reexamining the Guidelines. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

\*\* - Steps to Take, Comprehensive Perinatal Services– Program Guidelines for Enhanced Health Education, Nutrition, and Psychosocial Services, Step to Take Guidelines, 1997 Edition, CDHS.

\*\*\* - Research to date concludes that there is insufficient data for recommendation for rate of weight for the 1<sup>st</sup> trimester.

## INSTRUCTIONS WHEN PRE-PREGNANCY WEIGHT IS NOT KNOWN

### **At the first visit:**

1. Estimate the woman's pre-pregnancy status (*underweight, normal weight, overweight or obese weight*) by considering her current height and weight. If uncertain, consider her to be within the normal range.
2. Determine the week of gestation at the time of the current weight.
3. Place a dot on the grid where the line representing the week of gestation crosses the lower line of the weight gain range estimated to be appropriate for the woman.
4. Subtract the number of pounds represented by the line at the dot from the current weight to determine an estimated pre-pregnancy weight. Record this estimated pre-pregnancy weight on the appropriate weight gain grid, noting that it is "*estimated*", or "*calculated*".

### **Example:**

Pre-pregnancy Weight = Est. 150 lbs. - **or** Pre-pregnancy Weight = Calc.150 lbs.

### **When future weight measurements are available:**

1. Determine the number of pounds gained or lost by comparing the current weight with the estimated pre-pregnancy weight.
2. Determine the week of gestation on the date of the current weight.
3. Place a dot on the grid where the line representing the number of pounds gained or lost crossed the line representing the week of gestation.
4. Compare the change in weight between measurements with the gain expected for the estimated pre-pregnancy status (*underweight, normal weight, overweight, or obese*).
5. Consider the results of this assessment with the results of the dietary and clinical (physical/medical) assessment to determine appropriate recommendations.

### Reference:

Adapted from Maternal and Child Health Branch, WIC Supplemental Food Branch, California State Department of Health Services, Prenatal Weight Gain Grid, June 1991.