

Too much sodium, not enough vitamins and minerals in diets of pregnant women

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A new study suggests that many pregnant women are not getting the proper amounts of some vitamins and minerals, even with supplements, while many are getting potentially excessive amounts of sodium.

The new study appears in the recent edition of *JAMA Network Open*.

Regan Bailey, an associate professor in nutrition science in Purdue University's College of Health and Human Sciences, led the research team.

The study looks at the [dietary intake data](#) of 1,003 pregnant women in the U.S., and researchers discovered that many of the participants consumed too little of vitamins A, C, D, E, K and B6, as well as folate, choline and minerals iron, potassium, calcium, magnesium and zinc. Almost all of the participants consumed too much sodium, and in some instances, consumed too much folic acid and iron.

"Without dietary supplements, 80 to 95 percent of pregnant women would fail to achieve iron

recommendations," Bailey said.

Traditionally during pregnancy, women will take additional nutritional supplements, including prenatal vitamins. In the study, almost 70 percent of pregnant women took a [dietary supplement](#), primarily prenatal vitamins.

"It appears that supplements may be necessary for most pregnant women to meet nutrient recommendations," Bailey said. "However, our findings suggest that responsible formulations of prenatal products could help women achieve recommended intakes without the potential for excess."

Bailey says balance, moderation and variety are ways to encourage a healthy diet for all. She also encourages [pregnant women](#) to talk to their [health care provider](#) or a registered dietitian regarding dietary questions or concerns.

More information: Regan L. Bailey et al. Estimation of Total Usual Dietary Intakes of Pregnant Women in the United States, *JAMA Network Open* (2019). [DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2019.5967](#)

Provided by Purdue University

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