

CHAPTER 13

PREGNANCY AND BREASTFEEDING

OVERVIEW

Pregnancy and lactation are critical periods of physiological stress that substantially increase the demand for nutrients and energy. This chapter begins with a description of fetal growth and development and definition of a successful pregnancy. Increased nutrient needs during pregnancy and recommended weight gain is explained. An appropriate food plan for pregnancy is outlined including the need for supplements and modifications for a pregnant vegetarian. The Looking Further section describes various factors (from multiple births to smoking) and the effects of these factors on pregnancy outcome. Physiological changes of pregnancy and associated problems like morning sickness, anemia and pregnancy induced hypertension are discussed. The section on Breast-feeding explains lactation physiology and milk release. Dietary recommendations for the breast-feeding mother are covered. The concerns about, advantages of and barriers to breastfeeding are also presented.