

# Prenatal weight talks are easier with props

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Significant improvements in communication between providers and patients surrounding gestational weight gain during prenatal care were found using a new combination of education and a tracking tool in a study by the Mother Baby clinical service line of Allina Health and Children's Minnesota.

"Because weight may be a sensitive issue, many providers are uncomfortable talking about it. Using an objective tool may help communication," said Marijo Aguilera, M.D., a maternal-fetal specialist with Minnesota Perinatal Physicians, part of Allina Health.

Compared with control clinics, patients at intervention clinics were more likely to remember that a provider gave them advice about [weight gain](#) (92 vs. 66 percent); be satisfied with the discussion with their provider about weight [gain](#) (83 vs. 64 percent), and report a prenatal weight gain target that fit within guidelines (72 vs. 50 percent).

To address what has been learned about how prenatal weight gain can affect the health of both mothers and babies, the federal government issued revised guidelines for prenatal weight gain in 2009. However, it is estimated that more than half of expectant mothers either gain too much or too little weight during pregnancy. The researchers say improving education and communication about the [weight gain](#) guidelines is an important step towards improving outcomes.

The study, Examination of Routine Use of Prenatal Weight Gain Charts as a Communication Tool for Providers, funded by the Abbott

Northwestern Hospital Foundation, appears in the October issue of the *Maternal and Child Health Journal*.

**More information:** Marijo Aguilera et al, Examination of Routine Use of Prenatal Weight Gain Charts as a Communication Tool for Providers, *Maternal and Child Health Journal* (2017). [DOI: 10.1007/s10995-017-2308-x](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10995-017-2308-x)

Provided by Allina Health

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