

# ADHERENCE TO CANADA'S FOOD GUIDE RECOMMENDATIONS DURING PREGNANCY



## BACKGROUND

Optimal nutrition in pregnancy is vital for limiting the risk of pregnancy complications for the mother and supporting the growth and development of the fetus. In Canada, pregnant women are typically referred to Canada's Food Guide (CFG) which recommends that pregnant women in the second trimester onward consume an extra 2–3 servings/d from any of the following food groups: fruit and vegetables, grains, meats and alternatives, or dairy alternatives, in addition to the dietary recommendations for non-pregnant women. The CFG offers little directed guidance on the consumption of less-healthy (LH) foods, defined as “foods and beverages high in calories, fat, sugar or salt” other than stating that these foods should be “limited.” Health Canada recommends following the CFG to achieve healthy gestational weight gain.

## THE STUDY

**1630 women with term, singleton pregnancies who had complete dietary, demographic, and pre pregnancy weight data were included in the analysis.** Dietary assessment was done via 24 hour recalls in the second trimester using the multi pass method.

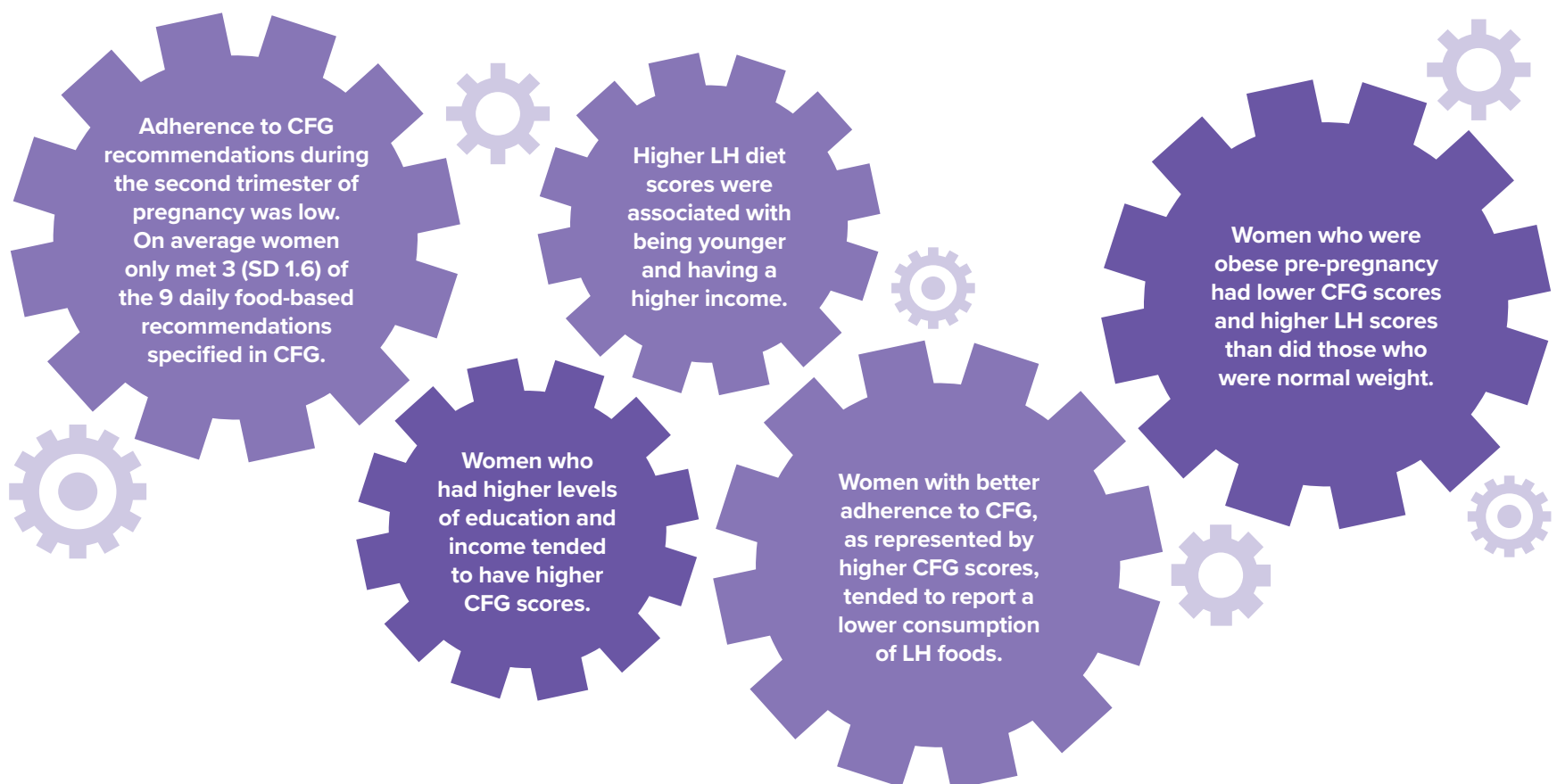


**The Alberta Pregnancy Outcomes and Nutrition (APrON) study is a prospective cohort study of women during pregnancy and post-partum and their infants.**

Participants were recruited through advertisements in the media and in physicians' offices in Calgary and Edmonton between May 2009 and November 2012. Eligibility criteria were being aged 16 years or more, literacy in English and duration of gestation less than 27 weeks. Participants who provided written informed consent were invited to attend a study centre in Calgary or Edmonton once during each trimester following enrolment and once at about 3 months postpartum.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Create two dietary scores, one to examine women's adherence to CFG recommendations and a second to account for consumption of LH foods.
2. Examine factors associated with both CFG adherence and the consumption of LH foods.
3. Examine these diet scores according to prepregnancy BMI status



## CONCLUSION

Adherence to national dietary recommendations during pregnancy is low and further research is needed to determine whether low adherence is due to a lack of awareness, or if other factors are at play. In a healthcare system in which GWG guidelines are based on prepregnancy BMI, it may be necessary to tailor dietary guidelines as well.

Jarman, M., Bell, R. C., Nerenberg, K. Robson, R. J., and the APRON and ENRICH Study Teams. (2017). Adherence to Canada's Food Guide Recommendations during Pregnancy. *Curr Dev Nutr*, 1:e000356.



ENRICH Research Program  
University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta  
[enrich.ualberta.ca](http://enrich.ualberta.ca)

This research was done in partnership with:

