

Nutrition *and the* Pregnant Adolescent

A PRACTICAL REFERENCE GUIDE

EDITED BY

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**Center for Leadership, Education, and Training
in Maternal and Child Nutrition**

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The mission of the Center for Leadership, Education, and Training (LET) in Maternal and Child Nutrition at the University of Minnesota, Public Health Nutrition Program, Division of Epidemiology, is to promote, preserve and enhance the health and nutritional status of children, adolescents and their families through leadership education. The LET Program prepares nutrition professionals for leadership roles in MCH nutrition and is a regional and national resource on maternal and child nutrition for health professionals.

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PREFACE

Nutrition and the Pregnant Adolescent: A Practical Reference Guide, is a resource for health professionals on nutrition and adolescent pregnancy. This project was supported by a grant from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Public Health Service. This book is written for health professionals and educators involved in the care of pregnant adolescents, including nutritionists and dietitians, nurses, midwives, and physicians.

The overall goal of this book is to promote the health and nutritional status of pregnant adolescents and to achieve optimal pregnancy and infant outcomes. The book focuses on clinical application of current knowledge on adolescent pregnancy emphasizing assessment, management, counseling approaches and strategies to promote dietary change and adequate weight gain. Topics are presented in a format that outlines and highlights subjects for easy reference.

Teenage pregnancy continues to be a major public health issue and is associated with significant medical, nutritional, social and economic risk. Nutritional status is considered to be one of the most important environmental factors affecting the health of the teenage mother and her child. An adolescent's nutrition and weight status and lifestyle practices prior to and at conception as well as during gestation profoundly influence pregnancy and infant outcome. Pregnant adolescents want to have healthy babies and pregnancy provides a window of opportunity to motivate and guide the adolescent to make healthful choices. Addressing the needs of pregnant adolescents poses different challenges than working with pregnant adult women and requires an understanding of the developmental and social issues of youth as well as specific counseling approaches geared to adolescents. This book is dedicated to helping health care providers learn more about nutrition issues and management of adolescent pregnancy and thus promoting a healthy pregnancy outcome for mothers and their infants.

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