



Alberta Pregnancy  
Outcomes and Nutrition

# The APrON Leaflet

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## See how we've grown!



Since our last edition, the APrON study has reached over **1100 participants!** Thank you! We appreciate the time, work, and commitment you have given to this important research.

## APrON opens brand new doors...

September 28<sup>th</sup> marked the grand opening of APrON's newest study location - the **East Calgary Health Centre**. We hope this new location will make it easier for women living in East Calgary to participate in the study. Rest assured, we are still going strong at our other two locations: the Alberta

Children's Hospital in Calgary and the University of Alberta in Edmonton. We will continue to welcome participants at both of these locations. For more information on APrON at the East Calgary Health Centre, please call the main APrON Calgary line at (403)955-2783.



East Calgary Health Centre  
Main level, 4715  
8 Avenue SE  
Calgary, Alberta



## Why do we take your body measurements?

As APrON participants, you've all gone through the 'body measurement' experience. Basically, you're taken into a room where a researcher records your weight (current and pre-pregnancy), height, body circumferences, and skinfold thicknesses – perhaps not the most enjoyable experience when you're pregnant or have just given birth! But have you even wondered why this information might be useful? Truth be told, there is a method to this madness! The combination of skinfold thicknesses and circumference measures helps researchers calculate your body composition (i.e. your percentage of fat and lean body mass and the way fat is distributed in your body). Body composition, along with weight and height measurements, will be used to determine whether pregnant women in Alberta are following the current Health Canada guidelines for weight gain during pregnancy. Researchers also hope to use this information to identify similarities in body mass index (BMI) before pregnancy, changes in weight gain and body composition during pregnancy, and post partum weight retention patterns between women.



**“APrON now  
has over 1100  
participants  
from Calgary  
and Edmonton!”**

## APrON study looks at the use of natural health products in pregnancy...

Although the old adage “eating for two” is not entirely correct, the body does have increased nutritional needs during pregnancy. Micronutrients, such as folic acid and iron, are required in higher amounts during pregnancy in order to support the proper growth and development of the fetus, as well as the many physiological and metabolic changes that take place in the body. The use of Natural Health Products (NHPs) has become a common strategy used by pregnant women to help increase their intake of key nutrients. Mariel Fajer Gomez, a master's student from the



University of Alberta, is studying just that! The purpose of her project is to assess the use of NHPs among pregnant women in Alberta in order to determine if current supplementation guidelines for folic acid, vitamin D, calcium, and iron are being met. So far, data has been collected for the first 600 APrON participants and analysis will start shortly. Mariel hopes that her findings will increase our knowledge of NHPs and allow us to better understand their use throughout the course of gestation. Good luck, Mariel. We look forward to learning about the results from this very interesting study!



# Team member profiles

## Catherine Field, PhD - Primary Investigator



Dr. Field began her academic journey at the University of Guelph, where she obtained a Bachelor of Science. She then went on to complete a Masters of Science from the University of Toronto and a PhD in Nutrition and Metabolism from the University of Alberta. Now a professor of nutrition at the University of Alberta, much of Dr. Field's research focuses on the role of nutrition and specific nutrients in the function of the immune system in health and disease. Her interest in early nutrition (particularly essential fatty acids) and child development, along with a longstanding collaborative relationship with the study's team leader, Bonnie Kaplan, are what first drew her attention to the APrON study. Now that the study is underway, Dr. Field is excited by the amount of nutrition information we have been able to gather from our participants. She hopes that the findings from the APrON study will help to influence nutrition guidelines for pregnant women in the future.

## Dayna-Lynn Dymianiw, Calgary Research Assistant Supervisor

When Dayna started with APrON in February 2009, she was the first Research Assistant to work on the project in Calgary. Now as the Research Assistant Supervisor, her duties have expanded to include training new staff, overlooking recruitment and ensuring clinics run smoothly. Dayna loves being involved with this project. In fact, working for APrON has changed Dayna's plans for the future, bringing a

new passion for pregnancy and healthy babies to the forefront of her career plans. She feels there is still so much more to learn about prenatal health and early child development. Dayna's favorite part of working on APrON is hearing pregnancy stories and getting to meet APrON babies.



### APrON fun facts!

- A total of **520** APrON babies have been born!
- Only 4% (23) babies have been born on their expected due dates.
- In all instances of twins, the chance of having twin girls is 25%, twin boys is 25%, and twins of opposing sexes is 50%. So far, we have seen 5 sets of twins in the study - all of which have been boys.





## Carrot and Ginger Soup



*Preparation time: 10 minutes / Cooking time: 45 to 50 minutes*

- 3 cups water
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 4 cups sliced carrots
- 1/2 chopped onion
- 1 tbsp vegetable bouillon powder
- 2 tsp pure maple syrup
- 1 tsp curry powder
- 1/2 tsp grated gingerroot
- 1 1/2 cups milk

**Preparation directions:** In large saucepan, bring water to a boil. Add garlic, carrots, onion, bouillon powder, maple syrup, curry powder, and ginger; return to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 40 to 45 minutes or until carrots are tender. Remove from heat. Working in batches, transfer soup to blender and puree on high speed until smooth. Return soup to saucepan and add milk. Heat over low heat (do not boil or milk will curdle).

*Source: Simply Great Food (Dietitians of Canada)*



## Next Issue

- **Your questions answered:** Why do we take a cheek swab from dad?
- **Recruitment update**
- **Team member profiles:** Meet two more members of the APrON team

## We want to hear from you!

We welcome your feedback! If you have any **comments, questions** about the newsletter, or would like to **refer a friend** to participate in our study, please contact us by phone or email at one of the following:

### **APrON Calgary**

Alberta Children's Hospital  
2888 Shaganappi Trail NW  
B4-501 (4th floor)  
Calgary, AB T3B 6A8  
**Phone:** 403-955-2783

**Email:** infocalgary@apronstudy.ca

### **APrON Edmonton**

University of Alberta  
Human Nutrition Research Unit  
Room 3-11, Agriculture & Forestry Centre  
Edmonton, AB T6G 2P5

**Phone:** 780-492-4667

**Email:** infoedmonton@apronstudy.ca

