

Prevalence of Maternal Obesity and Nutritional Status among Pregnant Women in UK

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Abstract

Obesity is the common health issue in current era. It is defined as the condition of accumulation of excess fat in the body which in turn shows adverse effects on health. Obesity is calculated in terms of Body Mass Index (BMI). BMI is measure of fat based on height and weight of an individual. A person with BMI 25-29.9 kg/m² means he/she is overweight. In terms of BMI, Obesity can be defined as the condition of having BMI greater than 30 kg/m². Obesity is divided into three classes which include: Class I (BMI-30-34.9 kg/m²), Class II (BMI-35-39.9 kg/m²) and Class III (BMI-40 and above). In the current era, due to lack of physical exercise and proper diet, people are prone to obesity. Women during pregnancy are more susceptible to Obesity. This condition is known as Maternal Obesity. It is one of the major risk factor in Obstetric practice. It may result in negative outcomes for both mother as well as the foetus. Obesity in Pregnancy may result in serious health conditions like Gestational diabetes and Preeclampsia. It may also result in future health problems for both mother and child. Inorder to prevent the risk of Maternal Obesity, one must follow nutritional diet from the first trimester.

Keywords: Maternal obesity; Nutritional diet; Body mass index; Birth outcomes

Introduction

Maternal Obesity increases the risk to both mother and child during Pregnancy. Sometimes, its effect may extend to future health risks. It is associated with several risk factors which include higher risk of mortality, low breast feeding rates and many psychological outcomes. A recent study of UK investigated and found that the increasing levels of overweight and obesity leads to higher risk of gestational diabetes, hypertensive disorders, caesarean section and macrosomia [1-9]. Weight gain in pregnancy is also associated with future weight gain and obesity in women. So inorder to get rid or to decrease the weight during pregnancy, doctors recommend light exercises and healthy diet. If any negative symptoms like faintness, dizziness, nausea, headache, vaginal bleeding, etc. occurs, immediately the exercises must be aborted. Females must be of normal weight at the time of pregnancy so that other health risks can be decreased [10-14].

The care that must be taken by pregnant woman can be known from the doctor and from the internet sources. Digital media plays a major role in providing required information. Through Open access literature women can access the information like

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the precautions to be taken to get rid of maternal obesity, methods to be followed in order to reduce the weight, etc [15-21]. Peer reviewed journals of Omics, provide cutting edge of the current novel technologies that are taking place globally. These journals provide more visibility and accessibility to readers in gaining the required information [21-27].

Globally Collaborated Societies

Physicians, Gynecologists, researchers around the world unite to form an association with the aim of disseminating knowledge that is required for females during pregnancy. Lebanese Society of Obstetrics & Gynecology was one of the oldest groups of professionals set up to promote their scientific knowledge and clinical skills in paving way for the healthy pregnant life of women [28-33]. Institute of Food Science & Technology of London was established with the aim of providing genuine information to the scientific community. It provides various innovative food processing technologies as well as the latest emerging trends in food science. All the scientific bodies of this association serve for the promotion of maternal and child health. The Association of Food Technology is another non-profit organization of Turkey, formed for the development and expansion of recent trends in food technologies and also plays a major role in determining food safety [34-39]. The main aim of all these societies is to promote better health of women and child during and after pregnancy. These associations enable in understanding the disorders during pregnancy by creating awareness among the women around the globe [40-46].

Visibility of Open Access Journals

Open access literature plays a major role in disseminating knowledge to the scientific community without any subscriptions and restrictions. Journal of Women's Health, Issues and Care promotes the latest research taking place in the current era and exhibits to the world of science without any restrictions. In an article entitled Methodology of the My Body is Fit and Fabulous at Home(MyBFF@home): An Intervention Study to Combat Obesity among Housewives in Malaysia published in this journal, showed that female adults (including housewives) are one of the high risk groups that require specific obesity intervention [47-54]. Journal of Pregnancy and Child Health is one of Open access journal which provides cutting edge for the development of new therapeutic strategies for better healthier pregnant life. Linda E May of USA showed that lack of education and resources, especially for teenage pregnancy as common barriers in rural communities in her article entitled Community Awareness Pregnant Women and Child Health in Four North Carolina County. These journals ensure the barrier-free distribution of its content through online open access and thus help in improving the citations for authors and attaining good journal impact factors [55-61].

Open access journals are led by the prestigious Editorial board which consists of experienced professors and scientists who strive for promoting and disseminating their knowledge to the common people across the globe. Linda J Patrick, a professor at University of Windsor, Canada has published her views in correlation of Women's Health and Obesity in her article entitled The Obesity Epidemic and Women's Health. She explained that women who are overweight and sensitive to their sizes must seek information for promotion of their health or else they must visit a physician for their good health. In an article entitled Missing in Action: Physical Activity for Women with Heart Disease, written by one of the prominent Editorial board members, Patricia B Crane showed that women without physical activity are more prone to heart disorders compared to the women with physical activity [62-67].

Open Access Journals in alliance with Conferences

Apart from journals, conferences also play a major role in providing latest research information to the people. At 10th International Conference and Exhibition on Obesity & Weight Management which was held at Dallas in USA, Edita Stokic, has exhibited her views on Non typical points on Obesity, in which she mentioned that obesity is a disease characterized by accumulation of fat around the organs of the body which in turn results in diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, stroke, sleep apnea, etc. Horia Al Mawlawiof Saudi Arabia has presented his views on childhood obesity and made it remarkable at the conference. He also mentioned that, according to the World health organization, 41 million children under the age of 5 years are overweight and obese as per the survey conducted in 2014 [68-76]. Tesfai Yemane Nguse of Thailand presented his views on Obesity in his article entitled Obesity trends in Sub-Saharan Africa: What endanger its status? at 6th World Congress on Obesity held at Toronto in Canada. He stated that overweight and obesity are on rise in low and middle income countries especially in sub Saharan African countries [77-83].

Nutritional Diet during Pregnancy

Women who take more sweets such as candies and processed juices during the early pregnancy are at higher risk of being overweight. A healthy and well balanced diet must be taken during pregnancy in order to decrease the symptoms like nausea and constipation. More vitamin, protein and minerals like Folic acid and iron intake along with more calories for energy is necessary for all pregnant women. Having healthy diet doesn't mean eating too much [84-89]. If women conceive with a healthy weight, there doesn't exist any need of extra calories during the first trimester. During the second trimester, extra 340 calories followed by extra 450 calories during the third trimester. Some foods are contraindicated during pregnancy. Such foods must be avoided. These foods include raw or uncooked sea food and meat, soft cheese, unpasteurized milk, etc. All these foods are sources of bacteria and they can be harmful to the unborn child. Apart from these foods alcohol consumption must be prevented during pregnancy. It is because; intake of alcohol during pregnancy may cause physical defects, learning disabilities and emotional problems in children [90-94].

Statistics on Maternal Obesity in UK

The prevalence of maternal obesity is not calculated in UK but the required data can be known from the Health Survey for England. The Health Survey for England shows that the prevalence of obesity in women during pregnancy has been increased during 1997-2010 [95-97]. The rate of prevalence of maternal obesity in UK was found to be 4.99%. A retrospective study among the maternal services in England found that the incidence of obesity among women during the first trimester was 15.6%. A report by the National Audit Office in England showed that 6% of all deaths in UK in 1988 were due to obesity [98-100]. Another report showed that the deaths due to obesity were more incident in UK with 8.7% whereas the deaths across European region was 7.7%.

Conclusion

Women must take utmost care in order to maintain their weight during Pregnancy. They need to use more calories than they intake. Calories can be used up by regular exercises. In case of maternal obesity, physical activity is the main way to lose the weight. This may include aerobics, swimming, brisk walking etc. Contraindicated and fatty foods must be avoided during pregnancy. Being overweight and obese increases the risk of complications to mother and unborn during pregnancy. The increase in BMI leads to increased risks which include gestational diabetes, preeclampsia, blood clots, miscarriage, etc.

Eating healthy foods helps to maintain the required calories without any fat deposits. Losing small weight during pregnancy can improve overall health of mother as well as child and leads a way to better healthier pregnancy.

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