

OBESITY AFFECTS ABILITY TO CONCEIVE: INCREASE YOUR SUCCESS WITH JUST 10 LBS



According to the Office of Women's Health, a healthy weight can help you get pregnant and help you improve your chances of a healthy pregnancy and baby. Weight that is too high affects fertility, not just for those who are trying to conceive naturally but also for women who are trying to conceive through in-vitro fertilization.

How much weight is considered too high is determined by the Body Mass Index (BMI). The BMI screening tool can be easily computed using this NIH calculator and filling in the height and weight. A BMI between 25 and 29.9 is considered overweight, and a BMI of 30 or greater is considered obese. Dr. Barbara Hessel, MD explains that "with an obesity epidemic that seems to be out of control in this country, its effects can reach far beyond heart health and blood pressure as many women struggle with their weight and their ability to conceive and carry a baby to term."

The link between infertility and obesity is multifaceted since a number of weight related factors can affect the ability to conceive. For example, fat cells make estrogen and higher estrogen levels act like birth control -interfering or altogether preventing ovulation.

Dr. Hessel explains “overweight women who have a body mass index (BMI) of 24 to 31 showed a 30% increase in infertility from anovulation—meaning their ovaries were not releasing an egg for fertilization—than women of a normal weight. Women with a BMI higher than 31 saw a 170% increase in anovulation related infertility.” Menstrual abnormalities also occur more frequently as BMI increases. High body fat alters reproductive hormones and changes the normal rhythm of the menstrual cycle, the maturation of eggs for fertilization, and reduce your chances of getting pregnant and carrying that baby to term without complications.

Research shows that for obese women, losing weight can trigger the body to facilitate contraception and improve reproductive health. While age is a factor, the ideal range to get pregnant is a BMI in the normal range 18.5 to 24.9. However, the ideal range is not required. For women who are obese, just losing 10 to 20 pounds can bring significant changes in their ability to get pregnant. Excess weight loss results in ovulation improvement and higher conception rates. Not only is it easier to get pregnant, the pregnancy experience has fewer complications from high blood pressure and diabetes.

For those who struggle with obesity, successful pregnancy begins with treating obesity. Every effort to achieve a healthy weight will increase the chances to conceive. To target obesity and improve pregnancy outcome, make lifestyle changes with a reduced calorie diet and adding a fitness regimen.



Sedona Fitness for Women: Forest Hills is an exceptional fitness option for women in the Forest Hills and surrounding area. The Sedona for Women clubs were designed for women. With a variety of cardio, strength equipment and group fitness programs, the club caters to different ages and fitness levels. From custom workouts with Personal Training, to the relaxation that comes with FAR Infrared Sauna sessions, Sedona Fitness for Women has options and amenities that are rewarding physically and mentally.

The club attracts women who are looking to start or maintain a fitness lifestyle in a supportive and comfortable environment. For information about touring a Sedona for Women club, call (718) 544-5504 or visit sedonaforwomen.com.



Consult a doctor before making changes to your diet. Barbara Hessel, MD, FACOG, is a board-certified obstetrician/gynecologist who has been working with patients in the Forest Hills, NY area for over 15 years. To learn more about your chances for conception, contact Dr. Hessel for an evaluation at (718) 275-7200 or visit drhesselmd.com.