



CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES

PRENATAL WEIGHT CONTROL MAY PREVENT DISABILITY

Evidence based programs should be conducted to control weight during pregnancy to prevent birth defects, developmental delays and disability in infants.

A forum was held at the National Press Club on “How Much Weight Women Should Gain During Pregnancy.” Presenters at the forum were researchers, policy experts and leaders in the field of prenatal health.

Summary

It was clear from the document “Weight Gain During Pregnancy” and panel discussions that effective implementation of weight control during pregnancy needs to be individualized, but should also receive community based interventions. However, for the most part, recommendations in the report were limited to physician counseling, research on epidemiology and identification of cohorts associated with health outcomes. Reproducible, generalizable evidence based protocols using behavioral and social science interventions in the community were missing from the report.

At present, research on weight control during pregnancy is focused on randomized control studies that determine efficacy and never move to reproducible, evidence-based, widely disseminated protocols in community environments. There are few practioners that are trained to use evidence based behavioral interventions and actually apply them in the patient settings.

Disability Prevention Issue

Preconception evidence based services, such as education on diet and physical activity to control overweight or obesity in women before they conceive, should be standard public health practice. Individualized community based research procedures that involve evidence based protocols that include the behavioral and social sciences are well developed. The model indicates that if you use the *IOM pregnancy weight guidelines*, with *personnel trained* in these ways (i.e. applied behavioral sciences); under these *conditions* you will get improved health *outcomes* with these stratified *populations*. Reproducible protocols should be widely disseminated and should describe *who* does *what* to *whom*, *where*, *when* and *for how long*.

Intervention

A letter was sent to a presenter to comment on a post forum discussion regarding the need for evidence based protocols to effectively implement the “IOM Pregnancy Weight Guidelines”

Recommendation

Evidence based programs should be conducted to control weight during pregnancy to prevent birth defects, developmental delays and disability of infants.