

Study reveals weight loss as low as 5% can improve chances of pregnancy for obese women

March 27, 2016 - American Surgecenter, Healthcare



Dr. Patrick Noel, The American Surgecenter

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates: Losing weight is difficult for most people. As if that is not enough, it is also said that women generally have a harder time shedding off excess pounds than men. Although there is a healthy target weight that needs to be achieved when one is aiming for weight loss, experts agree that even a modest reduction in your total body weight is beneficial for your overall health. In fact, for women struggling with obesity and infertility, losing as little as 5 per cent of their body weight can dramatically improve their chances of pregnancy, a study reveals.

Evidence proves that extra body weight affects a woman's ovulation and decreases her chances of getting pregnant. Although bringing your weight down to the healthy range is ideal for your fertility and the baby's health, the *Human Reprod* study, led by A.M. Clark from the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology of the University of Adelaide in Australia, shows that a small step of 5 per cent weight reduction can assist in achieving pregnancy.

In the study, a weight management program was assessed to determine whether it could help overweight anovulatory women to establish ovulation and help achieve pregnancy without further medical intervention. Anovulation refers to a cycle in which a woman fails to ovulate. Although most women will experience anovulatory cycles at some point in their lives, it is considered abnormal and a common cause of infertility.

Participants in the study underwent a six month programme of behavioural and lifestyle change, committing to regular physical activity and balanced diet. Women lost an average of 6.3 kg, with 12 of the 13 subjects resuming ovulation and 11 of them becoming pregnant. Improvements in the subjects' fitness, diet and self-esteem were also observed. Researchers concluded that weight loss, with its subsequent improvements in ovulation, fitness and psychometric measurements, is a viable *first-line treatment option* for obese women suffering from infertility.

Obesity has become a major problem globally, more so because of the health consequences associated with it. The World Health Organisation predicted that there will be over 2.3 billion overweight and 700 million obese individuals by the end of 2016. The UAE in particular has a very high rate of obese people with a study by the University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation revealing that more than 66 per cent of men and 60 per cent of women in the UAE are already overweight or obese.

While obesity and its links to diabetes, heart disease and chronic health complications are often highlighted, its impact on women's fertility is not emphasized enough.

Dr. Patrick Noel, Laparoscopic and Bariatric Surgeon for The American Surgecenter in Abu Dhabi, said: "Obese women are three times more likely to suffer infertility than women with a normal body mass index, especially because obesity causes hormonal imbalances and problems with ovulation."

Exercise and dieting may not result in weight loss for some individuals, even despite repeated attempts. Until a few years back, this would mean a very worrying and helpless situation for the person trying to lose weight. Fortunately, there is ever growing evidence today to show that weight loss surgeries can increase fertility in women.

"Obesity adversely impacts fertility – and even *in vitro fertilization* (IVF) outcomes – through a variety of mechanisms. Weight loss by surgical procedures can increase fertility in women by improving menstrual cyclicity in anovulatory women. The increased risk of miscarriage in obese women may also decline after bariatric surgery. Moreover, study findings suggest that women who have gone through weight loss surgery were less likely to suffer from diabetes during pregnancy," Dr. Noel explained.

While bariatric surgery promises hope for obese women struggling to conceive, Dr. Noel emphasized that it is not suited for everyone. "Weight loss surgery should only be considered as a last option. If you still fail after repeated attempts to lose weight through diet and exercise, then that's the only time you should consider bariatric surgery. Moreover, it is important for women who successfully gets pregnant after undergoing bariatric surgery to undergo strict post-operative care and be followed up by a group of specialists including a nutritionist, an educated nursing staff, an obstetrician, an endocrinologist, an internal medicine specialist, and a bariatric surgeon," Dr. Noel concluded.

The American Surgecenter is on 12th Street (Mubarak Bin Mohammad Street), Villa 408, Al Rawdah Area, Abu Dhabi. Telephone number +9712 4430909.

About The American Surgecenter:

The American Surgecenter is a state of the art medical facility offering the latest medical, surgical, dental and aesthetic services available, in a discreet, culturally sensitive and patient-centered setting. Our physicians are HAAD licensed and American Board certified, as well as distinguished leaders and pioneers in their specialized fields of practice. Our patient and family-oriented care is centred on a team approach. In each of our programs, we collaborate with a team of medical specialists from multiple disciplines to offer comprehensive treatment plans, from diagnosis, to surgery and recovery, to clinical follow-up and observation. For The American Surgecenter, our patients' thoughts, concerns and goals are an integral part of creating a personalized treatment plan.

About Dr. Patrick Noel:

Dr. Patrick Noel currently serves as Laparoscopic and Bariatric Surgeon for The American Surgecenter in Abu Dhabi. Trained in minimally invasive surgery in the early '90s by Prof. Jacques Domergue in Montpellier, he has become one of the most representative laparoscopic surgeons in the South of France. Later, he founded the bariatric department in a private practice in Aubagne, Marseille (France).

With more than 5,000 bariatric surgeries (sleeve gastrectomy, gastric bypass, duodenal switch, gastric banding) and more than 750 revision procedures, his work has become a cornerstone of bariatric surgery in France.

In December 2012, his experience in the bariatric field was recognized worldwide during the Sleeve Consensus Summit in New York, where he was invited by Professor Michel Gagner, the originator of laparoscopic sleeve gastrectomy and one of the world's leading experts in both minimally invasive surgery and weight loss surgery, to present the largest experience in revisional surgery from gastric banding to sleeve gastrectomy. Subsequently, this series was published in *Surgical Endoscopy*. In fact, his entire list of publications illustrates perfectly his surgical career – the evolution from a young surgeon at the beginning of the laparoscopic era into an international leading figure in bariatric surgery. He continues to prove his interest in new bariatric approaches by developing resleeve gastrectomy or SPIDER surgery.

Thanks to his entire laparoscopic experience, not only in the bariatric domain, Dr. Patrick Noel has been actively involved in different activities of French Surgical Societies, having been elected as a member of several boards including: The French Society of Endoscopic Surgery (SFCE), SOFFCOMM (French Bariatric Society) and the ICYLS (International Club of Young Laparoscopic Surgeons). He is also a member of the Scientific Board of the *Journal de Coeliochirurgie*.

Share this:

