Plus Size Birth: Nursing Considerations & Implications

JEN MCLELLAN
Overview

- What It's Like To Be Plus Size & Pregnant
- Address Your Personal Bias
- Size-Friendly Care Providers
- Larger Equipment
- Labor
- Birth
- Postpartum
What It's Like To Be Plus Size & Pregnant
1978

“In agreement with most other studies, no significant increase in cesarean sections or operative forceps delivery was noted in [the obese group]”

American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology, 1978

Today

BMI > 35 = 47.4% Cesarean Birth

The Institute of Medicine, 2009

BMI > 50 = 80% Cesarean Birth

Planned Vaginal Delivery or Planned Cesarean Delivery in Women with Extreme Obesity, 2011
Perceived Weight Discrimination and Obesity, Angelina R. Sutin, Antonio Terracciano, 2013
High Risk Assumptions

MY LAST PREGNANCY, I WAS TOLD THINGS LIKE -
SO WHEN DO YOU WANT TO SCHEDULE YOUR C-SECTION FOR?
I DON'T DELIVER VAGINALLY FOR FAT WOMEN SUCCESSFULLY EVER,
SO LET'S JUST GET IT OUT OF THE WAY AND SCHEDULE NOW.

AT EVERY APPOINTMENT, I WAS CHECKED FOR ONE-HOUR GLUCOSE TEST, EVEN THOUGH EVERY TIME IT CAME BACK GREAT.

Fat Vagina Theory

MY CARE PROVIDER ACTUALLY SAID - YOUR BODY ISN'T THE ONLY THING GETTING FATTER. YOUR VAGINA IS GETTING FAT, TOO.
AND THERE WON'T BE ROOM TO PUSH OUT YOUR BIG BABY,
BECAUSE FAT WOMEN HAVE BIG BABIES.

Focus Only On BMI

OFTEN, I FEEL HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS "DON'T SEE" PLUS-SIZED BODIES AS INDIVIDUALS AND ARE JUST FOCUSED ON A NUMBER ON THE SCALE.
Video
Address Your Personal Bias

1. Do I make assumptions based only on weight regarding a person’s character, intelligence, professional success, health status, or lifestyle behaviors?

2. Am I comfortable working with people of all shapes and sizes?

3. Am I sensitive to the needs and concerns of obese individuals?
Work On Your Bias

• YouTube Video: Weight Bias In Health Care
• Weight Bias and Discrimination: A Challenge for Healthcare Providers (obesityaction.org)
• Health At Every Size (haescommunity.com)
From preconception to postpartum, women need access to positive and supportive information to promote healthy decision making.
### Increased Risks

#### Adjusted Predicted Absolute Risk (%) of Selected Adverse Fetal and Maternal Outcomes According to Maternal Prepregnancy BMI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BMI (kg per m²)</th>
<th>Macrosomia*</th>
<th>Shoulder dystocia</th>
<th>Stillbirth</th>
<th>In-hospital newborn mortality</th>
<th>Preeclampsia</th>
<th>Gestational diabetes mellitus</th>
<th>Preterm birth†</th>
<th>Cesarean delivery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>35.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>42.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>48.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>53.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BMI = body mass index.

*—Birth weight greater than 9 lb, 15 oz (4,500 g).
†—Delivery before 37 weeks’ gestation.

Flip the Script

Gestational Diabetes

15% RISK FOR GESTATIONAL DIABETES.

Flip Gestational Diabetes

85% CHANCE YOU WON'T DEVELOP GESTATIONAL DIABETES!
LET'S TALK ABOUT HOW TO BE PROACTIVE WITH YOUR HEALTH.
 Patients don’t like to be called obese!

Have realistic conversations about preconception weight loss.

Address topics like weight gain during pregnancy, testing 2x for Gestational Diabetes, and a difference in fundal height measurements from a place of compassion.

Empower women to be proactive with their health!
3 Keys For A Healthy Plus Size Pregnancy

- Nutrition
- Physical Activity
- Size-Friendly Healthcare Provider
Size Friendly Care Provider

- Compassionate
- Aware of personal biases
- Provides individualized care
- No high risk classification based only upon BMI
- Doesn't make assumptions about nutrition/physical activity
- Treats patients with dignity
Larger Equipment

- Armless Chairs
- Blood Pressure Cuff
- Urine Catch Basin
- Speculum
- Scale
- Gown
Fetal Monitoring

- Washcloth/Baby Blanket
- Belly Band
- Positions
- Folded Blanket
- Wireless Monitoring
- Intermittent Auscultation
Labor

- Fetal Monitoring
- Induction
- Longer Labor
- Labor Positions
  - Exercise & Peanut Balls
- Epidural
Birth

- Birth
  - Labor Bed
  - Hold Legs
- C-Section
  - Panniculus Retractor
  - Wound Vacuum
  - Longer Operating Time/Increased Risks
  - Emotional Obstacles
Postpartum

- Fundal Massage
- C-section Recovery Tips
  - T-Shirt Strips
  - Hairdryer (Cold)
- Walking Support
- Breastfeeding
  - One day longer to reach full milk supply
  - Positioning
  - Connect with an IBCLC
- Postpartum Depression
We all want healthy moms & healthy babies. Let's work together!