

Transcript Details

This is a transcript of an educational program. Details about the program and additional media formats for the program are accessible by visiting: <https://reachmd.com/programs/clinicians-roundtable/obesity-and-infertility-link/56783/>

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Understanding the Link Between Obesity and Infertility

Announcer:

You're listening to *Clinician's Roundtable* on ReachMD. On this episode, we'll learn about the connection between obesity and infertility with Dr. Alex Polotsky. He's a Professor and the Division Chief of Reproductive Endocrinology, Infertility, and Reproductive Sciences at University of Colorado Anschutz. Here's Dr. Polotsky now.

Dr. Polotsky:

Obesity in adult life is a significant factor that determines and helps to predict fertility, successful pregnancy, and the best chances for a healthy baby.

In women, it affects menstrual periods, whether the periods are expected to be normal or not. And there is a fairly significant correlation between body mass index and regular periods. It is well known and well characterized that folks who are able to maintain normal body mass—and that's usually defined as a BMI of about 18.5 as the lowest limit to about 25 as the highest limit—have the best chances of successful conception and pregnancy.

In men, similarly, obesity, especially significant obesity, is known to have a negative impact on sperm count and also the ability to conceive in later years.

What is not as well known is whether or not specific interventions to aggressively address obesity have immediate impact. We don't know if lifestyle modifications or aggressive measures for weight management definitely have a beneficial impact on higher chances of conception and higher chance of pregnancy. And so at this point in time, we cannot really offer or recommend specific weight management strategies specifically for fertility.

When folks see fertility providers and doctors helping them to proceed with pregnancy, it is important to see that these measures should be looked into in a systemic manner because there are a lot of other factors that affect fertility and pregnancy. And so the best advice that could come from clinicians is that body mass index and weight management should be evaluated along other considerations, such as ovarian health, ovarian function, menstrual periods, male reproductive parameters, and other factors affecting fertility.

Announcer:

That was Dr. Alex Polotsky talking about the connection between obesity and infertility. To access this and other episodes in our series, visit *Clinician's Roundtable* on ReachMD.com, where you can Be Part of the Knowledge. Thanks for listening!