

Changes in well-being, diet and activity habits of pregnant women attending a commercial weight management organisation

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1 Background

Overweight and obesity can be problematic during pregnancy both for the mother and baby (Bhattacharya et al. 2007). Slimming World allows women to attend group sessions throughout their pregnancy to adopt healthier lifestyles with the support of their midwife. Group leaders do not advise on weight change during pregnancy but instead support women in eating healthily and remaining physically active.

2 Aim

To assess lifestyle changes being made by pregnant members of a commercial weight management group.

3 Methods

A survey of members attending Slimming World whilst pregnant was conducted via a web-based questionnaire which was available on the members' website for 7 days. The questionnaire looked at age, weight (on joining the group, pre-pregnancy and post-pregnancy), height, group attendance and changes in behaviour (both eating and activity habits). Likert 5-point scales were used to assess changes in behaviour.

4 Results

82 pregnant members responded with the majority (n=48, 58.8%) aged 26-35 years.



Fig 1: Changes in eating habits since joining Slimming World
Positive values indicate an increase in a particular behaviour and negative a decrease in that behaviour

Changes in activity habits

Since joining, respondents reported being:

- Less likely to watch a lot of TV
- More likely to walk more often
- 38 (46.3%) respondents reported they had become more active overall
- 29 (35.3%) felt the programme had helped them maintain their activity levels during pregnancy.

Perceptions of health, self-esteem and self-confidence

Many respondents 'strongly agreed' the following had improved:

- General well-being (n=51, 62.2%)
- Self-esteem (n=33, 40.2%)
- Self-confidence (n=31, 37.8%)

Members also reported they felt healthier since joining (n=51, 62.2% 'strongly agreed').

74 (89%) stated that they were planning to breastfeed when the time came.

5 Conclusion

Membership of Slimming World can have a positive influence on dietary and activity habits and perceptions of well-being whilst pregnant.

	Joined whilst pregnant (n=18)	Already members before becoming pregnant (n=64)
Mean joining BMI (SD)	35.9kg/m ² (7.7)	33.2kg/m ² when joined 29.2kg/m ² (5.2) by the time fell pregnant
Reasons for joining	Avoid excess weight gain during pregnancy Improve health for themselves and their babies	Lose weight Improve health

References

Bhattacharya, S., Campbell, D. & Liston, W. 2007. Effect of BMI on pregnancy outcomes in nulliparous women delivering singleton babies. *BMC Pub Health* 24(7):168.

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