

HEALTHY MOM, HEALTHY BABY: THE RISKS OF EXCESS WEIGHT



Oregon
Health
Authority

PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION
Center for Prevention and Health Promotion

The Preventing Obesity Before it Starts! section of this toolkit presents information and resources about opportunities to prevent obesity during pregnancy and early childhood. This section is intended to be a resource that complements the bonus clip Healthy Mom, Healthy Baby from the Weight of the Nation documentary series. The toolkit and bonus clip address the concept that a life course perspective on combating obesity may be the best way to end the epidemic for the next generation.

About this section

The bonus clip presents one mom's experience of being diagnosed with gestational diabetes during her pregnancy and discusses a variety of opportunities for families to create a healthy life trajectory for their children. While the bonus clip presents one family's story and their efforts to make healthful choices, it offers public health practitioners an opportunity to consider program, policy, system and environmental change strategies to support all our families in preventing obesity before it starts. Topics addressed include: infant cues, breastfeeding, fast food, sugar sweetened beverages, screen time, infant feeding, sufficient sleep and physical activity. Other related factors not addressed in this bonus clip include: stress, maternal depression, smoking and social determinants of health such as poverty.

Before beginning the screening, it can be helpful to acknowledge a few key concepts that may not be adequately addressed in the bonus clip:

- 1. Personal challenges with weight:** Food, eating and weight are personal issues. Staff may be reluctant to participate in this discussion about obesity prevention when they may themselves be struggling with food, eating or weight issues. You might open the discussion by acknowledging people's feelings before moving forward with the discussion. Many people have struggled at some point in their lives to lose a few pounds, to have enough to eat, to eat healthier, to achieve better fitness - our objective will be to move beyond the personal and focus on prevention solutions for our communities.
- 2. Social determinants of health:** You might invite a brief brainstorm or discussion about what keeps us from being more healthy in our society. This could allow for an acknowledgement of the role of poverty, safety, physical environments, unhealthful policies, disparities, and other factors that are important aspects of designing healthy communities and preventing obesity before it starts.
- 3. Population health:** This mom's story is a vehicle to illustrate opportunities to prevent obesity before it starts. While the focus of the clip is on the individual, and is presented from a clinical perspective, our goal is to consider the lessons learned in this video from a population perspective. How can we reshape our programs, organizations, places, communities, and partnerships to support healthy choices for all our families and prevent obesity before it starts?

Leveraging the Weight of the Nation

Healthy Mom, Healthy Baby: The Risks of Excess Weight

Watch this bonus clip as a group along with your public health colleagues and community - partners schedule a conference room, invite your colleagues working to promote health and participate in our state-local conversation! Together, you'll build a common foundation of knowledge, share ideas and perspectives, and foster collaboration. Healthy Mom, Healthy Baby is approximately 30 minutes long.

Suggested discussion questions:

1. This bonus clip isn't perfect or comprehensive - What did you not see in this bonus clip that you wish you had? What important factors did the video overlook, or not represent?
2. What are some common misperceptions about weight and pregnancy?
3. What are some common misperceptions about weight during the early childhood years?
4. What are some barriers to breastfeeding? Can you think of anything that your program, organization, building or community could do to promote and support breastfeeding?
5. What can health care providers do to support women and families in achieving healthy weight?
6. What advice would you offer a woman who hopes to become a parent in the future?
7. Can you think of an example of a program policy, an institutional policy and a local policy that could promote one of the health factors referenced in the video?
8. Who are other important stakeholders in your community to help support obesity prevention efforts?
9. What are some resources in your community that could support this mom's efforts to achieve or maintain a healthy weight for her family?





Key Data Facts

- » Many children are already carrying too much weight at a very young age. In Oregon nearly 15% of children aged 2-5 years who participate in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program are already obese.
- » More than one third (37%) of children are not breastfed at 6 months of age.
- » Nearly a quarter of children 0-8 yrs old (23.8%) live in a household where the family eats a meal together less than 5 days a week.
- » Young children's diets are often poor. For example, over one third (36%) of moms report that their two-year-old child consumes soda pop (or other sweetened beverages) in a typical week, more than half (61%) report that their two-year-old child does not eat vegetables (other than potatoes) daily and 68% of mothers report that two-year-old child consumes French fries at least once in a typical week.
- » Young children spend too much time sitting in front of screens. 16.7% of two-year-old children exceed two hours of screen time on an average day, and over half (56.3%) of children aged two to eight years old watch two or more hours of TV or videos on an average weekday. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no screen time for children under two years old and no more than two hours per day for children over two years old.
- » Finally, many Oregon families are food insecure. About 13.6% of households in Oregon (more than 491,000 Oregonians) suffered food insecurity in 2009-2011, while about 6% of households in Oregon (more than 213,000 individuals) went hungry in 2009-2011.

Core Messages from Healthy Mom, Healthy Baby

- » Health starts in our earliest experiences and environments.
- » Parents have an important role to play in helping set a positive trajectory for their children's food, activity and screen time behaviors.



- » Women who have had gestational diabetes and their children are at higher lifetime risk for obesity, abnormal glucose tolerance and diabetes.
- » Children who are breastfed are at reduced risk of obesity. Studies have found that the likelihood of obesity is 22% lower among children who were breastfed.
- » Children of parents who are overweight or obese are themselves at risk for obesity.
- » Infants are ready for solid foods when they are around six months of age and can do all of the following; sit up, hold head steady, open mouth to show interest in food and close lips around the spoon and swallow. Early introduction of solid foods increases the risk for obesity.



Core Messages from Healthy Mom, Healthy Baby (continued)

- » Crying is not always an indication of hunger - it can indicate discomfort, disengagement, or boredom. When a parent responds with food for every instance of crying it may set an expectation that when a child is bored or uncomfortable, the child will receive food.
- » Avoid introducing sugar sweetened beverages, including fruit juices, to infants.
- » Parents can learn and know what is unique about their child. Through instinctive and responsive care giving, parents can help establish healthy, regular patterns for their children.
- » The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no screen time for children under the age of two, and no more than two hours for children older than two years old.
- » Encourage active play throughout the day for young children. Infants should have daily supervised "tummy time" when awake.



Definitions

Certain key terms are used throughout the bonus short and toolkit. Below are a set of definitions that outline the intended meaning and scope of these terms.

Infant hunger and satiety cues are behaviors that indicate an infant's state, temperament, and/or needs. Cues may be engaging or disengaging-indicating readiness to interact or a need for reduced stimulation.

Food marketing to children is the use of media, product placement, cartoons, games, contests, characters and other strategies to sell food to children. Foods marketed to children are typically nutritionally poor and calorie dense.

Sugary drinks are beverages high in added sugar, such as soda, pop, energy drinks, fruit drinks and sport drinks.

Life course perspective is a framework for conceptualizing the important role that early life events play in shaping an individual's long term health trajectory, including the interplay of risk and protective factors such as socioeconomic status, toxic environmental exposures, health behaviors, stress and nutrition.

Fetal origins of disease is also called developmental origins of health and disease - a growing body of evidence demonstrating that the social and physical environment of a pregnant woman can impact the expression of regulatory genes throughout life for her fetus, leading to vulnerability for disease in adult life.

Gestational diabetes is any abnormality in a woman's blood sugar identified when pregnant.

Accelerated weight gain is an amount of weight gained at a higher rate over time than expected.

Self regulation is a child's ability to control his/her behavior through the integration of emotion and cognition, including behaviors such as eating and activity.

Satiety is the state or condition of fullness.

Pre-eclampsia is a complication of pregnancy due to very high blood pressure, swelling and protein in the urine. Left untreated it can lead to eclampsia.

Resources

Overweight and Obesity in Children and Adolescents Knowledge Path, MCH Library at Georgetown University offers readers to a selection of current, high-quality resources about the prevention, identification, management and treatment of overweight and obesity in children and adolescents. Includes websites, electronic publications, links to research, policy and program databases, and more. http://www.mchlibrary.info/KnowledgePaths/kp_phys_activity.html

The Obesity Prevention Source: Prenatal and Early Life Influences, Harvard School of Public Health: This website offers an overview of the developmental origins of obesity, including both pre- and post-natal factors. The site offers an introduction to policy strategies for specific influences and settings to prevent obesity. <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/obesity-prevention-source/obesity-causes/prenatal-postnatal-obesity/>

Life Course Approach Resource Guide, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Offers an orientation to life course perspective, including recorded webinars, peer reviewed articles, papers, briefs, and more. <http://mchb.hrsa.gov/lifecourseapproach.html>

Physical Activity and Children and Adolescents Knowledge Path Offers a selection of current, quality resources for data, public health campaigns and other promotion programs, and reports on research that identifies promising strategies to improve physical activity levels. http://www.mchlibrary.info/KnowledgePaths/kp_phys_activity.html





Resources by Topic

- » **Breastfeeding:**
US Breastfeeding Committee <http://www.usbreastfeeding.org/>
- » **Sugar Sweetened Beverages:**
Rudd Center, Sugary Drinks Facts (Food Advertising to Children and Teens Score): Site for study of sugary drink marketing to youth, including nutritional information, assessment of marketing practices, examples of marketing media to children and more.
<http://www.sugarydrinkfacts.org/>
- » **Screentime:**
Media and Children, American Academy of Pediatrics
<http://bit.ly/IsQteF>
- » **Gestational Diabetes:**
Weight Gain During Pregnancy: Re-examining the Guidelines, Institute of Medicine, 2009 <http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2009/Weight-Gain-During-Pregnancy-Reexamining-the-Guidelines.aspx>
- » **Maternal Depression:**
Oregon Health Authority, Maternal Mental Health
<https://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyPeopleFamilies/Women/MaternalMentalHealth/Pages/index.aspx>
- » **Physical Activity:**
Let's Move <http://www.letsmove.gov/>

Key Policy References

- » **Early Childhood Obesity Prevention Policies, Institute of Medicine, June 2011:** Offers recommendations and potential actions to address specific risk factors for obesity in early care and education settings.
<http://bit.ly/meq7yv>
- » **Breastfeeding Policies, Federal and National Health Professional Organizations, CDC:** Compendium of federal and national health professional organization policies and positions on breastfeeding.
<http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/policy/index.htm>
- » **Oregon Breastfeeding Laws:** Details Oregon laws and regulations on breastfeeding.
<http://public.health.oregon.gov/HEALTHYPEOPLEFAMILIES/BABIES/BREASTFEEDING/Pages/Laws.aspx>
- » **Action Strategies Toolkit: A Guide for Local and State Leaders Working to Create Healthy Communities and Prevent Childhood Obesity. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, February 2011**
A toolkit for policymakers to prevent obesity in communities through a focus on active living, the built environment, and healthy eating.
http://leadershipforhealthycommunities.org/images/stories/LHC_Action_Strategies_Toolkit_100222%5B1%5D.pdf



Online Training Opportunities

- » **Life Course Nutrition, Maternal and Child Health Strategies in Public Health:** This online training is designed to help public health leaders describe the role of maternal and child nutrition in population health and identify actions they can take to create equitable access to healthy foods and food environments.
<http://www.nwcphp.org/training/courses/nutrition-details>
- » **Leadership, Education and Training (LET) Program in Maternal and Child Nutrition:** Web-based curricula and training information about maternal and child health nutrition for nutrition professionals and other health professionals who work with women, infants, children and adolescents. *<http://www.epi.umn.edu/let/>*
- » **USDA, WIC Works Resource System:** WIC Works is an online education and training center that includes a gallery of state developed training and materials covering a range of topics including breastfeeding, infant cues, introduction of solids and more.
<http://wicworks.nal.usda.gov/>

References:

Rethinking MCH: The Life Course Model as an Organizing Framework;
A Fine, M Kotelchuck
<http://www.hrsa.gov/ourstories/mchb75th/images/rethinkingmch.pdf>

Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk, American Academy of Pediatrics, February 2012: *<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2012/02/22/peds.2011-3552.full.pdf+html>*

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