



FERTILITY FACT SHEET

San Ramon / Orinda / San Jose

CAN WEIGHT AFFECT MY SUCCESS WITH FERTILITY TREATMENT?

Obesity is becoming a major health problem in all developed countries, especially the U.S. The health risks associated with obesity include the development of high blood pressure, diabetes, elevated cholesterol, heart disease, and cancer. Obesity has also been shown to be associated with infertility and miscarriage. Increasing weight can make it more difficult for women to ovulate and decrease the chance of pregnancy. Even if they do become pregnant, there is an increased risk of miscarriage and pregnancy complications such as gestational diabetes, high blood pressure, and preeclampsia. At the time of delivery women with obesity have a higher incidence of fetal distress, cesarean delivery, shoulder dystocia, and early neonatal death. For these reasons we recommend obtaining an ideal weight prior to conception.

Obesity can also affect the success, safety, and cost of fertility treatments. For women with an increased amount of adipose tissue in their mid-section, it can be much more difficult to see the ovaries with transvaginal ultrasound. Therefore, it can be harder to monitor the development of follicles and the proper timing of insemination or egg retrieval. This makes egg retrieval a higher risk procedure due to difficulty accessing the follicles safely with the needle. There is also increased difficulty monitoring and adjusting the amount of anesthetic medication to maintain adequate breathing during the surgery. Women who are obese will often require higher doses of medication to stimulate the ovaries thereby increasing the cost of fertility treatments.

For these reasons, at RSC, we have strict guidelines in regard to weight limits prior to attempting fertility treatment. A Body Mass Index (BMI) less than 40 is required in order to use fertility injections and/or undergo the egg retrieval.

BMI is a measure of someone's weight in relation to height. BMI tables and calculators are available for easy calculation of your BMI. You can go to <http://www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/bmicalc.htm> for a BMI calculator on line.

BMI categories are as follows:

Underweight	BMI <18.5
Normal	BMI 18.5-24.9
Overweight	BMI 25.0-29.9
Obese	BMI \geq 30.0

Women under the age of 35 who are obese and are trying to conceive, will often greatly benefit from taking the time to lose weight before conceiving. Some women with a history of infertility will become pregnant on their own after losing weight if regular ovulation can be restored. Women over the age of 35 who are obese are also faced with declining ovarian reserve, so it is a more difficult decision to delay childbearing in an effort to achieve a healthier BMI. Please discuss this further with your physician in order to develop the safest plan for your overall health and the health of your pregnancy.

We are committed to helping women normalize their BMI in order to attempt to conceive. If your BMI is above 29, and especially if it is above 39, please ask us about programs and counselors to get you started on a plan to achieve an ideal body weight.

1. Your plan should include a nutritionist to help you choose proper foods to eat as well as to set appropriate guidelines for weight loss in a reasonable amount of time.
2. It also should include an exercise program, as studies have shown that exercise has benefits for fertility both in terms of weight loss, but also in terms of altering hormone levels (like leptin) in your body that can make ovulation and conception easier.
3. Often times support groups and psychological counselors can make a tremendous difference in terms of sticking with a plan and achieving success.
4. Studies have shown that the best “trick” for getting and keeping weight off for women is having an exercise partner who will keep you accountable **daily** and make exercise more fun.

Some local resources are:

John Muir/Mt. Diablo Metabolic Nutrition Program 925-933-3438

John Muir/Mt. Diablo Center for Nutrition and Weight Management..... 925-685-7300

Sunrise Health Medical Group (www.wt-zloss.com)..... 925-552-0930

(They have offices in Danville, Concord, Oakland, Modesto, Pleasanton, and others...)

San Ramon Regional Medical Center, Dietician Service 925-275-8425

Alta Bates Medical Center:

Ann Doherty (Diabetes) 510-644-0891

Joyce Selkow (Dietician) 510-339-1862

Judy Franjeh (Dietician)..... 510-655-4000 x 3576

Debra Waterhouse (Eating Disorders)..... 510-339-3858

Please feel free to help us by adding to the above list, if you know of a helpful doctor or program!



888-377-4483
www.rscbayarea.com
www.thirdpartyfertility.com