Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust

Body Mass Index and infertility

Information for patients

Introduction

Being overweight or obese can have adverse effect on reproduction. This means that it may make it harder to get pregnant. Bringing your BMI down before you get pregnant, even by one or to points, will help reduce your risk of complications.

In women who need assisted conception (such as ovulation induction, IVF, ICSI),

recent evidence has shown a decrease in pregnancy rates with increasing body mass index (BMI), which is calculated as weight in kg/height in metres.

World Health Organisation classifies BMI as:

- Normal 19.0-24.9 kg/m2
- Overweight 25.0-29.9 kg/m2
- Moderately obesity 30.0-34.9 kg/m2
- Severe obesity 35.0-29.9 kg/m2
- Very severe obesity >40.0 kg/m2

Effects of Obesity on Fertility

- Irregular and/or infrequent menstrual cycles
- Increased risk of infertility
- Increased risk during fertility surgery

- Reduced success with fertility treatments

Effects of Obesity on Pregnancy

- Miscarriage
- High blood pressure during pregnancy
- Diabetes in pregnancy
- Birth defects
- High birthweight infants
- Caesarean section
- Postpartum haemorrhage

Benefits of weight loss

- Weight loss of 5-10% can achieve a 30% reduction in visceral fat and dramatically improve ovulation and pregnancy rates

- Improved health including reduced chances of developing diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease
- Reduced risk of miscarriage
- Improved self-esteem and well being
- Women who have BMI of 30 or over and who are not ovulating, should be informed that losing weight (even 5-10%) can increase their chance to conceive spontaneously.

Criteria for fertility treatment

If BMI is more than 30, we are unable to offer any definite investigation or treatment. A referral to a dietician will be discussed.

Strategies to achieve a normal/desired BMI

- Women should be informed that participating in a group programme involving exercise and dietary advice leads to more pregnancies than weight loss advice alone
- Men who have a BMI of 30 or over should be informed that they are likely to have reduced fertility
- Lifestyle modification
- Targeted approach
- Expert advice from dietician
- Exercise regime

Further information and advice can be obtained from:

NICE Guidance CG 156
ICB West Kent and Medway criteria for Assisted Conception Policy Protocols

NHS 111 ☎ 111
NHS Choices online www.nhs.uk

Fertility Service Mtw-tr.fertility@nhs.net

MTW NHS Trust is committed to making its patient information accessible in a range of languages and formats. If you need this leaflet in another language or format please ask one of your clinical care team or the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). We will do our best to arrange this.

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust welcomes all forms of feedback from our service users. If the standard of service you have received from the Trust does not meet your expectations, we want to hear from you. Please speak with the ward manager or the nurse in

charge in the first instance, or you can contact the **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)** on:

Telephone: ☎ 01622 224960 or ☎ 01892 632953

Email: mtw-tr.palsoffice@nhs.net

or visit their office at either Maidstone or Tunbridge Wells Hospital between 9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

You can be confident that your care will not be affected by highlighting any areas of concern or making a complaint. The Trust will retain a record of your contact, which is held separately to any medical records. If you are acting on behalf of a patient, we may need to obtain the patient's consent in order to protect patient confidentiality. More information on PALS or making a complaint can be found on the Trust's website: www.mtw.nhs.uk or pick up a leaflet from main reception.

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