

Title: Perspectives of Pregnant and Postpartum Latino Women on Diabetes, Physical Activity and Health.

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Abstract

Impaired glucose tolerance and diabetes are prevalent among Latino women of childbearing age. Physical activity during and after pregnancy may contribute to weight control and improved metabolic status, but recommended activities may not be perceived as appropriate or feasible. To plan realistic and acceptable interventions, pregnant and postpartum Latino women in Detroit met in a focus group series to discuss their beliefs about diabetes, and factors influencing their participation in regular physical activity during pregnancy and postpartum. Women believed that diabetes was primarily related to heredity and diet but not to physical activity. Exercise was believed to reduce stress and improve general health. Women suggested an organized group intervention, in a respected location, that offered safe physical activities within the context of a variety of activities for women and children. This strategy reduced concerns about safety and social acceptability, while addressing their primary interest in social support.