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The Relationship between Antenatal Body Attitudes, Pre-Pregnancy Body Mass Index, and
Gestational Weight Gain

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Abstract

Objectives

An estimated 50% of women experience excessive gestational weight gain (GWG). Maternal body attitudes are associated with GWG, however this relationship is complex and may differ based on pre-pregnancy body mass index (BMI) or gestational age. The aim of this study was to explore the moderating role of maternal pre-pregnancy BMI on the relationship between body attitudes in early-to-mid and late pregnancy and GWG.

Design/Participants

Pregnant women less than 18 weeks gestation were recruited for a postal questionnaire study via Australian pregnancy online forums, pregnancy and parenting magazines, and antenatal clinics. In early-mid pregnancy (Time 1; mean (M) = 16.81 weeks gestation, standard deviation (SD) = 1.18), participants reported demographics, pre-pregnancy weight, height, and body attitudes (salience of weight and shape, attractiveness, strength and fitness and feeling fat). In late pregnancy, body attitudes (Time 2; M = 32.65 weeks gestation, SD = 0.91) and weight (Time 3; M = 37.15 weeks gestation, SD = 1.55) were reported. Pre-pregnancy BMI and total GWG were calculated. Moderation analyses were conducted.

Findings

In early-mid pregnancy, pre-pregnancy BMI moderated the relationship between feeling fat and GWG. Pre-pregnancy BMI did not moderate the relationship between body attitudes and GWG for salience of weight and shape, attractiveness or strength and fitness in early-mid

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