Attenuating Pregnancy Weight Gain – What Works and Why: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis

Gestational weight gain is a factor that contributes to the rising obesity epidemic. Indeed, today about 40-70% of women gain weight in excess of the Institute of Medicine recommendations throughout their pregnancy. In addition to the generational effect of gestational weight gain, increased pregnancy complications arise including gestational diabetes mellitus and hypertensive disorder. The aim of this systematic review and meta-analysis was to address gaps that remain regarding gestational weight gain by comparing the efficacy of all approaches that have been used to prevent excessive gestational weight gain and to further describe and explore characteristics that can be analysed across intervention types.

Different intervention types were observed and the review found that interventions aimed at preventing excessive gestational weight gain can have positive result. However, the characteristics of the interventions are not predictors of the success of the intervention therefore complicating the design of interventions.