Lifestyle Interventions in Overweight and Obese Pregnant or Postpartum Women for Postpartum Weight Management: A Systematic Review of the Literature

The rising trends of overweight and obesity are a well-known public health emergency. In England, 49.6% of pregnant women are categorised as overweight or obese, which increases maternal and child health complications. The aim of this study was to systematically evaluate the effectiveness of lifestyle interventions initiated during the antenatal and/or postnatal period in overweight or obese pregnant women to manage postpartum weight.

A total of eighteen studies with variable aims were included in this review. Overall, the interventions reviewed included a combined approach of diet and physical activity or diet only approach. While more robust evidence is needed, the findings from this review suggest that interventions which commenced during the postpartum period were effective to reduce postpartum weight. Furthermore, within this review, the most successful intervention was diet-only one which included a calorie reduction of 500 kcal/day and a weekly and end of trial weight loss goal of 0.5 kg and 6 kg, respectively.