



"PCOS Fertility and Weight Loss..."

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Introduction

Ryan: Hi. This is your host Ryan and I am here today with our special guest Dr. Beverly Yates.

Dr. Beverly is an expert on weight loss and women's health including PCOS weight loss. **She has over two decades of clinical experience** as a caring doctor and a lifelong athlete.

In her former career as an MIT educated electrical engineer **Dr. Beverly was a problem solver** and now as a doctor she continues to use her problem solving skills to help other women solve their weight loss problems.

Now, in today's interview, which is part of Dr. Beverly's PCOS Weight Loss Tips series, we are going to be talking about **PCOS weight loss and fertility**.

Beverly welcome to the call and thanks so much for being here.

Dr. Yates: Yeah, hi. Glad to do it.

Are Women With PCOS More Likely to Have Fertility Issues

Ryan: So let's dive right in. **Are women with polycystic ovarian syndrome, which is PCOS, are they more likely to have issues with fertility?**

Dr. Yates: Yeah it is **much more common for women with PCOS to have fertility problems** then compared to women who don't have PCOS and these difficulties with getting pregnant and maintaining a pregnancy have a lot to do with the details of, you know, why it is that PCOS is such a problem to begin with. That long desired baby bump and the eventual baby may be really tough to achieve.

So it turns out that for some women **fertility is tied to being at a healthy weight**. Since about 60% of women with PCOS also have problems with weighing too much it **is a real set up for these fertility problems** and also **part of PCOS is the imbalance in the hormones** including the sex hormones like estrogen, progesterone, testosterone and that also affects fertility.

So it is important to understand that **success with fertility may be tied to getting to a healthy weight** and then staying at a healthy weight.

For many women with PCOS who want to have a baby **the biggest issue may be their excess weight** and it is getting in the way of their fertility and this is really tough to tackle.

Is Fertility Affected by Losing Some of That Excess PCOS Weight

Ryan: So, **is fertility affected by losing some of that excess PCOS weight?**

Dr. Yates: Yes, yes indeed.

Fertility is usually **positively affected by losing excess weight.**

So now just keep this in mind, **small successes sometimes have big impacts.** So for every 5% of excess body weight lost you get some really great benefits like lower blood pressure, improvements in cholesterol, and increased fertility too and that is great.

Such a small change, just 5% loss of extra body weight **can get you on the road to better health** all around and it improves your fertility too.

So I hope that women with PCOS can feel encouraged about the link between PCOS weight loss success and fertility problems.

If they want to have a baby and know that they need to lose weight that their desired goal of the baby bump and eventual baby **becomes much more likely as they lose that extra weight.**

Ryan: Very interesting.

Does Blood Sugar Affect Fertility if You Have PCOS

Ryan: Now as you are talking there I was thinking about some of the prior podcasts that we have done and I know that you had mentioned, we talked about blood sugar spikes and how poor blood sugar management can interfere with PCOS weight loss.

So talk to me a little bit. **Does blood sugar affect fertility as well if you have PCOS?**

Dr. Yates: You know interestingly, yeah it **sure does**.

Blood sugar does affect fertility directly if you have PCOS. If you have poor blood sugar management or regulation this will totally interfere with fertility.

So if your blood sugar is regularly higher than it should be, if it is outside the normal range, and it's too high say from eating too many sugary foods or sugary drinks at one time then **your body wants to go into fat storage mode**. Of course that is going to bump up your weight right, it is also **going to mess up your fertility**.

So at a certain point say you know you have reached your personal tipping point then **your body's insulin response to sugar becomes abnormal** and the insulin is no longer as effective as getting energy into your body's cells.

Ryan: So what you are saying is even though the body has excess weight, excess fat **it doesn't have enough energy?**

Dr. Yates: Amazingly yes, **I am saying that**.

It seems that when you assume, if you have a lot of extra body fat then you have a lot of extra energy. Well no.

If you talk to people who are chronically overweight and obese one of the, usually the number one thing they will say is that **they feel tired** right even though the extra fat represents theoretically extra energy.

So in a way **your body thinks that it is not getting enough energy**. So your **fertility is going to decrease**, it is going to drop in response to not having enough useful energy, **not just fat stored as energy but useful energy**.

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So your body thinks that it doesn't have the energy to begin and to continue a pregnancy.

Now in case it is not obvious and honestly Ryan I think a lot of people don't think of it this way. So it might not be obvious but pregnancy, **being pregnant takes a lot of energy**. So anything that interferes with the body being able to access that energy in a normal healthy way **will also interfere with conception**, it will interfere with getting pregnant, staying pregnant, and carrying a baby all the way through to birth.

Ryan: Interesting.

Dr. Yates: Yeah. If you regulate your blood sugar well and lose PCOS weight this **should lead to improved chances with fertility success** and having a baby.

In prior podcasts and articles I have gone into great depth on how PCOS weight gain happens. So if you are listening to this and you are at all mystified as to how the weight comes on, please do check out the other information. So if you need or want more information on this please check out our other podcasts, articles, and blog posts. I have gone into great detail to make this clear because I think you can do better once you know better. I am trying to make it so that folks have knowledge.

Ryan: Absolutely.

Can Weighing Too Little Affect Fertility

Ryan: As you are talking here a question comes to mind. We have been talking a lot about excess weight and it seems pretty clear that if you weigh too much that it interferes with fertility but recently I was doing some reading actually and I was looking at sort of ideal body fat percentages for men and women and I stumbled across something that talked about what happens when women have too little body fat, the affect it has on their body.

So I guess my question for you is can weighing too little also affect fertility?

Dr. Yates: Yeah, weighing too little **can definitely affect fertility** and how that works is this way.

Let's think about it, I mean overall that is really a good question because a lot of people don't understand that **fertility is affected by too little and too much weight.**

So this question makes this a really useful point to get out there and I am not insensitive here. I know many women who struggle with weight particularly who have PCOS probably don't want to hear a word about slender or skinny women right, but check this out. **If your body fat percentage is too low your fertility is lower. If your body fat percentage is too high your fertility is lowered.**

So it's clear that there is a range in which it is possible to become pregnant and have a baby. If your body is outside your personal normal weight range right and your body fat percentage **then your fertility goes down.**

Now in the case of too high of body fat percentage that excess weight gain results in difficulty with fertility and this affects the ability to have a baby at all.

For some women with PCOS that difficulty with getting pregnant and having a baby is strongly tied to what is happening with their blood sugar.

So uneven blood sugar is caused by eating too many sweets, grains, starches or other carbohydrates at any one time. This is what sets up a woman with PCOS to have chronic problems with her blood sugar.

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So chronic long term uneven blood sugar is what leads to too much body fat and excess weight and uneven blood sugar is often **at the core of fertility problems for women with PCOS** weight issues.

So **balancing blood sugar is key** to being successful both with improving fertility and losing weight. If you have PCOS it's a must.

Looking Pregnant and Having a Hard Time Getting Pregnant

Ryan: Thinking back to something that you said earlier and you mentioned the phrase baby bump a few times so far and I am curious. Is this an issue for women with PCOS in a different way other than the obvious reference to fertility?

I remember one of the things that you talked about one of the **common symptoms of PCOS is sort of having that bloated belly** and it can sometimes **look like a baby bump**.

So I am curious people look at a women with a big belly and they usually **think that she is pregnant**. It seems like for women this could be a really sore point, **a sensitive area for women who might look like she is pregnant but wants to be pregnant yet is having a hard time doing that**. Can you talk a little bit about that?

Dr. Yates: Yeah sure. You know you have touched a really sensitive nerve with this. For many women this is an issue and particularly with PCOS. That bloated belly can really be problematic. The appearance of being pregnant yet not being pregnant and in this case with fertility wanting to be pregnant and having trouble with it **can really be hurtful quite honestly**. People get really upset understandably.

It is one of the things about having PCOS that can be really emotionally difficult. A number of typical PCOS symptoms are **easy for the world to see** when they look at you.

Some of the symptoms that go along with PCOS are **acne bumps when you are an adult**. You know you are grown and you have got zits on your face, your chest or your back. That is really visible.

Excess body hair which is called hirsutism in places where women are usually not hairy. That is also easy for everyone to see. Their chin, facial hair, almost like a mustache, maybe some hair even along the chest. That is really embarrassing for many women and yes **having a big belly that isn't a baby bump** is particularly hard to deal with when you want to be pregnant and have a baby. People constantly asking about your larger than normal belly can keep rubbing your nose in what may be your problem. You would prefer to keep to yourself you know, privacy then is an issue here. So friends, family, strangers keep asking the question you would rather they kept to themselves over and over each day. You don't get a break.

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Some PCOS **symptoms are hard to hide** and the world can see your problems and struggles. It's harder to keep these difficulties and struggles private.

Ryan: Right, it makes a lot of sense.

Blood Sugar, Insulin Resistance, and PCOS

Ryan: I want to go back to something we were talking about a little earlier when we started touching on blood sugar and I really want to kind of get behind kind of what is going on with blood sugar.

So I am curious, what is behind the problem with blood sugar, insulin resistance, and PCOS as it affects a woman's fertility?

Dr. Yates: Well here is the deal, when the average blood sugar remains too high for too long over a period of time it **causes problems with blood flow in small places in the body** like the tiny capillaries where blood flows. Those are the smallest blood vessels where all the exchange of nutrients and waste happens.

Now I am not going to get too technical here but I really want to be clear and I think this is something that a lot of women, nobody bothers explaining this stuff and they don't understand why it matters. Why you have to say no to soda, that is the bottom line here and that is this.

For conception to happen, obviously, we all know this part, sperm has to meet the egg. Right, no secret there.

When conception happens, where conception happens rather is in an area of the body **where there are lots of capillaries** of course and these are **teeny tiny blood vessels**. Now their issues of blood flow or blood sugar is too high or if the body is too fat. This interferes with conception and maintaining a pregnancy.

So chronic high blood sugar leads to a process **where extra-large particles form in the blood**. These are made up of sugars. Things like glucose, sucrose etc. and proteins in the blood and when these combine the sugars with the proteins they become sticky. These extra-large particles then this combination, this clump if you will of sugar bound to protein can **really slow blood flow** in these tiny capillaries. They just don't have space for such big particles.

This phenomenon if you will **gums up the works** and makes it harder to conceive a child. It is a direct interference and similar to what can happen in diabetes for type 2 diabetics. It is why type 2 diabetics go blind or potentially can go blind if it is not well regulated. They can wind up with gangrene etc. it is the exact same process.

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So it becomes super important to keep blood sugar in a healthy range and **avoid those blood sugar spikes** if you want to improve fertility in the face of PCOS weight loss issues.

Ryan: It's interesting that you mentioned that because that is exactly what I was thinking about how diabetics can suffer from all these ailments related to the capillaries. The small tiny little vessels in their body being blocked and blood flow not getting to their extremities, to their toes, and to their eyes like you mentioned. So it's interesting that sort of the same phenomenon is going on.

Dr. Yates: Yes, it's a strange phenomenon.

The Number 1 Thing to Know in Dealing with PCOS Weight Issues

Ryan: If we go back to fertility for a moment. **What is the number one most important thing that women and girls dealing with PCOS issues, PCOS weight issues need to know?** If you can boil it down to the number one most important thing, what might that be?

Dr. Yates: I think this is the message that I want to convey. A woman's body is highly sensitive to whether she has enough energy of the right kinds to sustain her pregnancy. **If the body thinks your energy level is too low she is unlikely to get pregnant** and eventually have a baby.

Oddly enough even though extra body fat does represent like I said earlier, energy as extra calories that are stored as fat **it is not the kind of energy that is helpful for getting pregnant and staying pregnant** long enough for a baby to be born.

So once a woman becomes overweight or obese her body is no longer efficient in using the excess body fat for energy and it decreases her fertility. It then becomes **more likely she will have a harder time getting pregnant** or may not be able to get pregnant at all and **uneven blood sugar is often at the core of these fertility problems** for women with PCOS weight issues.

I just can't say it enough. **Balancing blood sugar is key to being successful both with improving fertility and losing weight** if you have PCOS It's a must.

So **having a body weight in a healthy range** that is important along with a hormonal balance that is favorable to conception and getting pregnant so that long desired baby bump is strongly tied to the potential mother having a healthy weight.

Ryan: Beverly this is fantastic as always. I know we have really just kind of touched the tip of the iceberg on really one very specific topic related to PCOS.

Is there anywhere else that someone might go if they wanted to get more information around fertility, PCOS weight loss, dealing with blood sugar, other kind of related issues and where they might get good credible information?

Dr. Yates: Yeah. Check out the tips and the info and the other recordings for this series. They are available in a number of places like **iTunes and YouTube** etc. and on my blog where I talk about **why blood sugar**

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balance is so important for women with PCOS it's a key issue in regaining and enjoying a healthy balanced life. I also talk about **stress management and food cravings** especially cravings for sugars sweets and carbohydrates including starchy foods like corn chips and potato chips. Problems in these areas can really mess up your fertility.

So it turns out that also that using **artificial sweeteners and fake sugars is not a good idea** because you are still pinning your body towards the sweetness and may directly also get in the way of your PCOS weight loss success and avoiding PCOS weight gain. Once again **it can interfere directly with your fertility**.

So all of these recordings are free.

So, just as a reminder, you can look for them online in the **iTunes podcast section or on YouTube** or on my website www.PCOS-Weight-Loss.com/blog and poke around in there.

So I sure hope you have learned something of value from this recording.

Ryan: Beverly, this was fantastic as always. You are just a wealth of information.

Once again I will remind people that you can go to also the website www.PCOSWeightLossTips.com to find out more about Dr. Beverly Yates and her programs and you can also go there to get a **complimentary free report containing weight loss tips and secrets** including a bunch of things that we didn't get a chance to talk about in today's interview and all of those tips and secrets are **specifically geared for women with PCOS**.

So once again the website where you can get access to all that free information is at PCOSWeightLossTips.com.

Once again that is PCOSWeightLossTips.com.

Thanks so much for being with us. Take care.