

# DO DIETITIANS RECOMMEND TOO MUCH CARBOHYDRATE TO WOMEN WITH GESTATIONAL DIABETES MELLITUS?: A PATIENT PERSPECTIVE (54483)

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**Background:** During the October 2017 joint Australasian Diabetes in Pregnancy Society and Society of Obstetric Medicine of Australia and New Zealand Conference, health care professionals reported that women with Gestational Diabetes Mellitus (GDM) often state that the quantity of carbohydrates in the Standardised Gestational Diabetes (SGD) diet is 'too much'. Our Diabetes Centre dietitians do not routinely experience this patient response in our multi-ethnic cohort.

**Aim:** To assess the patient perspective of the SGD diet, particularly in regards to carbohydrate amount and frequency.

**Methods:** An anonymous questionnaire was utilised to collect viewpoints from GDM women on the SGD diet. Pregnant women with pre-gestational diabetes, twins, non-English speakers and women with no or limited English literacy were excluded. Standard care was provided to all clients. The questionnaire was offered at least one week after an individual dietitian review appointment.

**Results:** Nineteen women have thus far been recruited. Responders represented seven ethnic backgrounds with the greater percentage South Asian (31.6%) and Middle Eastern (15.8%). Preliminary results show the majority of GDM women (84.2% n=16) perceived the SGD diet carbohydrate amount as 'about right'. Only 5.3% (n=1) perceived advised carbohydrate amounts as 'too much' or 'far too much'. Similarly, the majority of respondents (78.9% n=15) perceived recommended SGD diet eating frequency as 'about right'. In fact, a considerable proportion reported the carbohydrate amounts (63.2% n=12) and eating frequency (57.9% n=11) recommended by the dietitian as 'a little' or 'a lot less' compared to their usual intake. Commonly reported dietary changes included smaller meal portions (n=9), eating more often (n=6) and less carbohydrates or confectionary (n=6). The majority of grain-based carbohydrates were correctly identified, however milk (63.2% n=12) and fruit (73.7% n=14) were not recognised as carbohydrate-rich foods by many responders.

**Conclusions:** Preliminary findings suggest a trend for women to perceive the amount and frequency of carbohydrate within the SGD diet as 'about right'. Further recruitment to increase the sample size is ongoing.