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Availability of Food Preparation Supplies among Pregnant Women: Preliminary Results from the Decision Making, Eating, and Weight Gain during Pregnancy (DEW) Study

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Comments
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Background: Lack of cooking supplies may be a potential barrier to preparing healthy meals at home. We examined the availability of food preparation supplies among pregnant women in relation to sociodemographic characteristics.

Methods: We used preliminary data (N=59) from an ongoing study which enrolled English-speaking women aged 18+ years, pregnant with singleton gestation <36 weeks, pre-pregnancy BMI 18.5-40 kg/m^2, and planning to deliver at UMMHC. Women completed the Food Preparation Checklist (FPC) at home. The FPC asks women if 41 specific food preparation items; scores reflect number of items present in the home. Other variables were self-reported. Pearson's correlation, t-tests, and ANOVAs provided comparisons. We constructed an adjusted linear regression model to explore FPC by sociodemographic characteristics.

Results: Women were aged 30.3 (SD=4.1) years, 64.4% were non-Hispanic White, 84.8% were married or living with a partner, and 30.5% reported difficulty paying for basic expenses. Women were enrolled at 22.7 (SD=5.6) weeks gestation; 30.5% were primigravid. Mean pre-pregnancy BMI was 25.0 (SD=4.6) kg/m^2; 25.4% were overweight and 17.0% obese. Average FPC score was 32.3 (SD=6.1; range:14-39). FPC scores were higher among Non-Hispanic White women (34.6±3.5 vs. 28.1±7.5, p<0.0001), those with higher education (28.3±7.0 high school/GED or less, 31.0±6.2 some/college degree, vs. 34.7±4.6 some/degree graduate, p<0.01), those married or living with a partner (33.3±5.7 vs. 26.9±5.7, p<0.01), with lower pre-pregnancy BMI (r=-0.38, p<0.01), and who had no difficulty paying for basic expenses (34.0±5.0 vs. 28.4±6.6, p<0.001). In a model that additionally adjusted for pre-pregnancy BMI, non-Hispanic White women had on average 5.7 more food preparation items (95% CI: 3.2, 8.3) and those reporting difficulty paying for basic expenses 3.8 fewer items (95% CI: -6.8, -0.9).

Conclusions: Understanding the food preparation supplies available to pregnant women may be useful when designing interventions to improve diet quality and promote healthy weight gain during pregnancy.