Pre-Eclampsia: Factors Conferring Risk and Protection in Minority Women with Dysglycemia

This study builds upon knowledge and experience from prior research suggesting that the prevalence of pre-eclampsia among diabetic American Indian women (specifically Oklahoma Chickasaw and Choctaw) is low. Furthermore, we have also found a low prevalence of pre-eclampsia among Type 2 diabetic Hispanic women participants. Taken together, these observations support the intriguing hypothesis that type 2 diabetic women of American Indian ancestry (whether from North or Central America) are relatively protected from hypertensive complications associated with pre-eclampsia during a diabetic pregnancy. Risk and susceptibility for pre-eclampsia may be reduced through cultural and/or environmental factors (e.g., nutrition), altered levels of pro- and/or anti-angiogenic factors (that is, factors that impact blood vessel formation), and/or metabolic and genetic factors.

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Pre-eclampsia is a condition that occurs during pregnancy and is often characterized by an increase in blood pressure that can cause seizures, strokes, and organ failure. Pre-eclampsia may result in the death of the mother and/or baby.