

Review of Literature: Effects of Exercise on Bone Mineral Density during Lactation in Overweight/ Obese Postpartum Women

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Bone deposition occurs at rapid rates until peak bone mass is attained around age 30. Bone mineral density (BMD) is measured by dual energy x-ray absorptiometry (DXA) applied to sites of biological relevance, including the hip, spine and forearm. In overweight/ obese individuals excess fat provides some protective effect on the bone, but in lactating postpartum women this effect may be diminished due to the increased demand for calcium in breast milk for transfer to the infant. Calcium losses from the maternal skeleton can reach up to 400 mg/day. Research shows that weight bearing exercise provides protective effects of BMD; however research is limited in overweight/ obese women during the postpartum period. Therefore, the purpose of this project was to conduct a review of the literature on the effects of exercise on BMD during lactation in lactating overweight/ obese women.

Keywords: obesity, exercise, postpartum, lactation, bone mineral density

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