

Dr Clare Boothroyd presents the session - PCOS and Insulin Resistance

Voice 1:

Hello everyone. You're watching a video about PCOS and insulin resistance.

This videostream has been developed in partnership with Women's Health, QUT, and POSAA.

The guest presenter here with me today is Dr Clare Boothroyd who is a registered endocrinologist and gynaecologist, and Queensland's leading fertility specialist.

Dr Boothroyd is actively involved in research in many areas related to women's health and fertility, in particular unexplained infertility and PCOS.

Dr Boothroyd's practice, Assisted Conception Australia, is located in the Greenslopes Specialist Centre at Greenslopes.

Welcome Dr. Boothroyd. So to begin our discussion can you please explain what can women do to avoid insulin resistance?

Dr Clare Boothroyd:

I think we should first define what we mean by the term insulin resistance. Insulin resistance is the state in which insulin does not work as well. We all have insulin and insulin lowers the blood sugar level, and we know that in women who have PCOS particularly those who are overweight or obese are much more likely to have insulin resistance than women who don't have PCOS but have the same body weight.

But you can still get insulin resistance as you age, and as you carry more weight, and particularly if you have a family history of diabetes. So these things all tend to roll in together. So what happens with insulin resistance in order to keep the blood sugar at normal level which our body is very good at doing. Women with insulin resistance need to have higher levels of insulin in the blood.

And insulin comes from the pancreas which is a long sausage shaped gland behind the stomach. What actually happens is that the pancreas can really become (like all of us, I suppose) exhausted from working too hard making all this extra insulin and it doesn't make enough insulin. Then what happens is that the blood sugar level rises and the condition called diabetes occurs.

Now this can happen with or without PCOS. What we know is that in some way PCOS allows women to have more insulin resistance than their non PCOS sisters with the same body weight and age. So they are at an increased risk of diabetes long term and there is no other disease which carries with it such a huge risk of diabetes. So it is very important to prevent or reduce insulin resistance diabetes, so this is a very important question that you ask.

And I think in 2011 in practical terms there are really only three solutions.

There will be more in the future. But there are 3 here in 2011

One is weight loss. Weight loss is associated with an improvement in insulin resistance.

You don't need to lose a lot of weight to have a major improvement in insulin resistance.

The second thing is exercise reduces insulin. Makes people

Even if they don't lose weight. So I always say exercise even if you're not losing weight or get a of exercise that's sustainable and that you enjoy

That will reduce your insulin levels.

The third is if you like taking drugs in a medical sense in the medical profession and soon.

Is to use drugs like metformin. Now some people feel much happier about taking pills

But I really think that lifestyle is the thing. Lifestyle is the better way go and it is always better to be lean and to exercise than it is to take medication and we really a a study conducted in England called, which demonstrated that

Thankyou Dr. Boothroyd.