Hysterectomy and Weight Gain

Abstract:

Objectives: To investigate whether overweight women are more likely to have a hysterectomy and whether hysterectomy leads to increased weight gain.

Design: A cohort analysis and a nested case control analysis

Setting: Survey data from middle-aged women participating in the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women’s Health including self reported height, weight and hysterectomy.

Participants: Women who responded to surveys in 1996 (n=13125), 1998 (n=10612), 2001 (n=10293) and 2004 (n=9309).

Main outcome measures: First, we applied a cohort analysis to compare the body mass index (BMI) of women categorised according to hysterectomy status. Second, we applied a nested case control analysis to compare weight gain for women after hysterectomy to weight gain for women who did not have a hysterectomy, matched for height, pre-hysterectomy weight and educational level.

Results: Mean BMI before hysterectomy for women who subsequently had a hysterectomy (26.3 kg.m⁻²) was greater than for women who did not have a hysterectomy (25.5 kg.m⁻²; difference 0.9 [95% confidence interval (CI) 0.5 to 1.2]) and was not statistically significantly different from mean BMI for women who had a hysterectomy before the beginning of the study (26.8 kg.m⁻²; difference -0.4 [95% CI 0.0 to -0.9]). Weight gain over the 3 or 6 years following hysterectomy (OR 1.0 [95% CI 1.0 to 1.0]) was not associated with having a hysterectomy.

Conclusions: Hysterectomy did not lead to greater weight gain, but was more likely to be performed in women who were heavier and at risk for a higher rate of weight gain.