

‘What was your worst experience of weight stigma?’

Patient reports of bias by gynecologists

“I asked a gynecologist for help with low libido. His response: ‘Lose weight so your husband is interested. That will solve your problem.’ I changed doctors after that! What a nerve! And I’ve told everyone I know to stay away from that doctor.”

“My doctor repeatedly kept telling me that I would not get pregnant by being overweight. She kept telling me to lose weight, but offered no support, nor did she suggest any options for me to lose the weight. She also told me I had poly-cystic ovaries because I was overweight, and that was proven to be untrue ... she made that diagnosis without any tests. I must also mention that my doctor was overweight herself.”

“When I was four months pregnant with my second daughter, my doctor told me not to be concerned that he couldn’t hear the heartbeat because through all that fat it was hard to get a heartbeat on the monitor. I was so humiliated. I didn’t say anything, just asked not to see him anymore when I made my appointments.”

“I had to have a pelvic exam and could not get up on the table. The nurse was angry at me.”

“My gynecologist refused to help me with a problem I had because she said it was due to my weight. I have not gone back to a gynecologist since. I let my family doctor handle pap smears and breast exams.”

“One of my worst experiences as an overweight person was to have a doctor refuse to do a gynecological exam because of my size. First, I cried. Then I found a new clinic and a new doctor. But since then I have not had the courage to go to a doctor to have that type of exam done.”

“I went to the Emergency Room due to a miscarriage. The doctor acted like he didn’t want to touch me and could not look me in the eye during the entire ordeal.”

“My worst experience of weight-related stigmatization is when I go to the doctor’s office and their scale(s) are not equipped with the capacity to weigh me.”