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Community based study of reproductive tract infections (RTI) among women of the reproductive age group in a rural community of Eastern India

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Introduction: India is witnessing an unprecedented epidemiological and demographic transition with increased chronic disease burden on the one hand and declining mortality and fertility rates on the other. It is responsible for major ill health throughout the world. RTI/STIs have a profound impact on sexual and reproductive health worldwide and rank among the top five disease categories for which adults seek health care. The present study was conducted to estimate the current prevalence of RTIs based on a syndromic approach among women between 15 to 49 years of age, supported by both laboratory and clinical diagnosis to measure the actual magnitude of morbidity associated with RTIs among the study population.

Objectives: To study the prevalence of reproductive tract infection among the women of reproductive age group (15-49 years) and the socio-demographic factors influencing the occurrence of the disease.

Methodology: A cross-sectional study was done using a simple random sampling technique using a pre-designed pre-tested semi-structured schedule for data collection from 312 women of 15-45 years, residing in the field practice area. This was followed by clinical examination and collection of samples for laboratory tests in Urban Health Centre, attached to All India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health, Kolkata, West Bengal.

Results: The prevalence of RTIs among the reproductive age group women was 43.6% based on their symptoms of RTI with majority having abnormal vaginal discharge. According to laboratory investigations the most common cause of RTI was bacterial vaginosis. It was 67.4% (using Amsel's criteria) and 31.7% (as per Nugent's score), followed by Vulvovaginal candidiasis which was found in 12.4%. The influence of socio-demographic factors like younger age, increased parity, poor socio-economic conditions, early age at marriage, poor personal and menstrual hygiene practices had direct effect on occurrence of RTI in the community.

Conclusion: RTI among women of reproductive age is quite a common morbidity with significant predictive, contextual and direct covariates and wherever possible both clinical and laboratory findings should corroborate self reported morbidity to know the exact prevalence of any disease in the community.

Biography

Nibedita Das is a specialist (microbiology), at Institute of serology, kolkata, India. She has experienced in working in different viral diseases and special interest in antimicrobial resistance. She also loves to read, listen to music and surf the Net.

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