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Why pregnant women do not adherent to iron/folate supplementation? A cross-sectional study

Soraya Siabani¹ and Sina Siabani²

¹Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences, Iran

²Razi University, Iran

Background & Aim: Iron deficiency anemia and acid folic deficiency are two important health problems involving pregnant women worldwide, especially in less developed countries. Although these nutritional insufficiencies could be prevented by iron and acid folic supplementation, adherence to prescribed supplementations is still problematic in many nations. A cross sectional study in Iran was conducted to explore the likely reasons of non-adherence to iron/folate supplements.

Methods & Materials: In order to address the research question, 433 pregnant women selected randomly from western Iran (2016) were interviewed. Data gathering instrument was a validated semi-structured questionnaire containing 27 questions including personal characteristics, socioeconomic situation and the likely reasons for non-adherence. Using Chi-square and t-test, when applicable, the relationships between outcome variable and predicting variables were assessed. A p-value of <0.05 was considered significant.

Findings: The mean and standard deviation ($\mu \pm SD$) of women ages and their gestational ages were (27.86 \pm 5.54 years) and (23.29 \pm 9.86 weeks), respectively. The most common cause of non-adherence was forgetfulness and fear of side-effects, respectively. Educational status was only factor significantly associated with adherence to both supplementations.

Conclusion: Adherence to iron and folate supplementation in pregnant women can be promoted by minimizing side-effects and providing a strategy remembering women to take their pills on time.

Biography

Soraya Siabani is an Associate Professor at Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences, Iran and an External Supervisor at University Technology Sydney, Australia. She has received her PhD in Public Health from the University of Sydney, Australia. She also has a Medical Doctorate from KUMS, Iran. Her research focuses on health promotion and epidemiology of chronic diseases.

ssia5034@uni.sydney.edu.au, s_siabani50@gmail.com

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