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Assessment of WHO hemoglobin color scale for accuracy in diagnosis of anemia among pregnant women by health care providers in peri-urban settings in Karachi, Pakistan

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WHO Hemoglobin Color Scale (HCS) is claimed as a simple and low cost technique to detect anemia at primary health care settings of low income countries. The objective of this study was to assess the diagnostic accuracy of HCS comparing clinical signs assessment technique (CSAT) of health care providers against the gold standard of laboratory hemoglobinometry. A cross sectional validation survey was conducted among 194 pregnant women, recruited from two maternal and child health centers located in two separate towns of peri-urban settings in Karachi city, Pakistan, from June 2012 to February 2013. Anemia was assessed by HCS and CSAT by health care providers and compared with laboratory hemoglobinometry. Validity indices for HCS and CSAT were calculated. Receiver-operating characteristic (ROC) analysis was undertaken and the area under the curve (AUC) was calculated for HCS and CSAT. About 73% of women were found anemic (Hb < 11 g/dL), by hemoglobinometry, at the study antenatal clinics. The sensitivity and specificity of HCS was 70.9% (95% CI: 62.7-78.3) and 49.1% (95% CI: 35.1-63.2), for CSAT it was 95.7% (95% CI: 91.0-98.4) and 5.7% (95% CI: 1.2-15.7), respectively. The AUC for HCS for diagnosis of anemia was 0.60 (95% CI: 0.52-0.66) compared to 0.50 (95% CI: 0.43-0.57) for CSAT (p=0.01). The accuracy of HCS is better than CSAT method for assessing anemia by health care providers among pregnant women. HCS method may need to be piloted with other community based health care providers in Pakistan.

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Holistic medicine: Progress, prospects and paradigm shift to research and clinical approach

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A non-invasive recommendation looking at an individual's overall physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional wellbeing, avoiding an orthodox synthetic treatment, working in a non-pharmaceutical method is termed as holistic medicine which attempts to prevent illness by placing a greater emphasis on optimizing health. Holistic therapies tend to emphasize the avoidance of chemicals polluting the body and proper nutrition. Many alternative or natural therapies have a holistic approach, although that is not always the case. Since the principle of holistic healing is to ensure a comprehensive balance, there are no limits to the range of diseases and disorders that can be treated in a holistic way. When an individual seeks holistic treatment for a particular illness or condition, other health problems improve without direct treatment, due to improvement in the performance of the immune system, which is one of the goals of holistic medicine. Therefore, an uprising interest has been paid on the research of synergistic medicines with incredible remedial activities, economic viability, less side effects and capability of producing optimal health. Apart from this, multidrug resistance in human pathogenic microorganisms and orthodox allopathic drug-dependence provided impetus to explore the concepts of holistic medicine coining the traditional medicine, homeopathy, naturopathic medicine, traditional Chinese medicine, Ayurvedic medicine, nutritional therapies, chiropractic, psychotherapy and massage although the burden of the affordability of synthetic drugs is as well emphasized. Holistic medicine is particularly helpful in treating chronic illnesses and maintaining health through proper nutraceutical and stress management. However, the way of building holistic practitioners, the modes of function of holistic medicine, their coordination among different approaches, detoxification processes in physiological system, the concurrent research on harmonization and improvement in common and molecular uses, safety evaluation, prevalence and factors associated with the use, self-management and combination of scientific evidences of holistic medicines in the era of new generation synthetic drugs are aimed to be discussed in this research.

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