

Nutritional intake by the pregnant women

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ABSTRACT

A random sample of 300 pregnant women was selected. The sample of early pregnancy test (1st trimester) was selected for this study and till delivery they were observed. Among the selected 300 samples of pregnant women, 118 were from rural areas and 182 were from urban area. More per cent of the pregnant women was from urban area. There was significant difference in intake of nutrients by rural and urban women. Nutrient intake of urban women was comparatively higher than the rural sample.

Key words : Nutrient intake, Pregnant women, Pregnancy.

Pregnancy is a physiological condition in which the foetal growth is accompanied by intensive changes in maternal body composition and metabolism (Hyttén and Lietch, 1971). Pregnancy is a period of considerable physiological and nutritional stress, during which the maternal requirements of almost all the nutrients are greatly increased. Pregnant women are considered as a vulnerable group because of increased physiological demands. Diet during pregnancy is one of the most important factors in achieving a successful outcome of pregnancy in terms of healthy baby and maintenance of her own health, as the overall development of child is determined to a great extent by the type of nourishment it receives right from the conception.

Nutrition plays an important and special role in the course of pregnancy for the maintenance of sound maternal health. Hence, the requirement of nutrients for women during pregnancy increases significantly in order to meet the extra demands for rapid growth and development of foetus.

It is unfortunate to know that nutritional status of pregnant women in India is very poor as the diets are grossly deficient in supplying energy and other essential nutrients such as iron, vitamin A, B – complex vitamin and ascorbic acid.

This lacuna in the supply of different nutrients widens the gap between the actual intake and the recommended dietary allowances of nutrients in meeting the additional requirements of women during the course of pregnancy.

METHODOLOGY

A random sample of 300 pregnant women was selected. The sample of early pregnancy stage. (1st trimester) was selected for this study and till delivery they were observed. Data were stratified on the basis of

women's SES, living area and education.

The collected data were analyzed by using suitable statistical methods and the results were interpreted accordingly.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Background information of the selected pregnant women dependent on their living area.

In case of the type of family, from rural area the majority of the pregnant women (72%) were found to have joint family, whereas from urban sample, 75 per cent pregnant women belonged to the nuclear type family and 25 per cent pregnant women belonged to the joint family.

In case of educational level, 36.44% of the pregnant women from rural area were Middle School educated, 28 per cent high school educated, 13 per cent were College educated, whereas 14 per cent were Primary educated and the remaining 8 per cent were illiterate. On the other hand majority of the pregnant women (60%) from urban area were College educated, 14 per cent were High School educated and Middle School educated and the remaining 4 and 6 per cent were Primary School educated and illiterate, respectively.

This result showed that majority of the respondents from urban area were College educated whereas from the rural area were Middle School educated.

In terms of occupation from the rural area, the majority of the respondents were in service or in their own business and home makers, while 11 per cent respondents were labour and one per cent of respondents were the skilled worker and only, one per cent of the respondents were in semiprofessional jobs. On the other hand from urban area majority of the 43 per cent respondents were in service or in their own business per