

Assessment of Oral and Dental Health Status of Pregnant Women in Malaga, Spain

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Abstract : Dental decay is one of the most common chronic diseases worldwide and imposes significant costs annually on people and healthcare systems. Addressing this issue is among the important programs of the World Health Organization in the field of oral and dental disease prevention and health promotion. In this context, oral and dental health in vulnerable groups, especially pregnant women, is of greater importance due to the health maintenance of the mother and fetus. The aim of this study is to investigate the DMFT index and various factors affecting it in order to identify different factors influencing the process of dental decay and to take an effective step in reducing the progression of this disease, control, and prevention. In this cross-sectional descriptive study, 120 pregnant women attending Nepton Policlinica clinic in Malaga, Spain, were evaluated for the DMFT index and oral and dental hygiene. In this regard, interviews, precise observations, and data collection were used. Subsequently, data analysis was performed using SPSS software and employing correlation tests, Kruskal-Wallis, and Mann-Whitney tests. The DMFT index for pregnant women in three age groups 22-26, 27- 31, and 32-36 years was respectively 2.8, 4.5, and 5.6. The results of logistic regression analysis showed that demographic variables (age, education, job, economic status) and the frequency of brushing and flossing lead to preventive behavior up to 49.58 percent ($P<0.05$). Generally, the results indicated that oral and dental care during pregnancy is poor. Only a small number of pregnant women regularly used toothbrush and dental floss or visited the dentist regularly. On the other hand, poor performance in adopting oral and dental care was more observed in pregnant women with lower economic and educational status. The present study showed that raising the level of awareness and education on oral and dental health in pregnant women is essential. In this field, it is necessary to focus on conducting educational-care courses at the level of healthcare centers for midwives, healthcare personnel, and at the community level for families, to prevent and perform dental treatments before the pregnancy period

Keywords : Malaga, oral and dental health, pregnant women, Spain

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