

Knowledge and Practices on Complementary and Alternative Medicine in a Group of Iranian Pregnant Women

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Abstract:

Background and Purpose: The use of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) is growing in both developed and developing countries. This study determined Iranian pregnant women' awareness and practices on CAM and the reasons behind it.

Methods and Materials: This descriptive study was conducted among 320 women admitted to postnatal ward of Mazandaran hospitals from March to June 2015. Data were collected via a self-report questionnaire during 2-3 days after birth. The rate of awareness and using complementary and alternative medicine and related factors were asked. By naming 14 type of CAM, women were helped to remember their use. Data was analyzed using descriptive analysis and chi-square test.

Results: In this study, 45.1% (143) of women were familiar on CAM. Also, 26.8% of women used CAM during pregnancy. Most frequently CAM used were herbal preparations (9.5%), prayer (6.5%), hydrotherapy (5%) and bloodletting (4.1%). In most cases, CAM was used throughout pregnancy (39.2%). The most common reason for use of CAM was the safety of it and the majority of users reported the effectiveness of CAM (84.9%). Results show that women who were been familiar with CAM, more used it during pregnancy at significant level. There was a non-significant higher frequency of CAM used in women with specific socio-demographic characteristics.

Conclusion: Although the use of CAM among pregnant Iranian women was not high, due to limited information on safety of CAM and probable adverse consequences on mother and her fetus, examine the safety and efficacy of it during pregnancy is needed.

Keywords: Complementary and alternative medicine, Knowledge, Practices, Pregnancy, Women

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