

PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS DUE TO COVID-19 ON PREGNANT WOMEN AND NEWBORN

ABSTRACT

There is no indication that covid-19 has a long-term effect on pregnancy, the mother's psychiatric condition, or the infant's developmental delay. Between May 1st and July 31st 2020, 72 pregnant patients with covid-19 took part in a study that took place in different locations. Since giving birth or undergoing an abortion, these woman patients engaged in three-month follow-up surveys. The data was collected from Covid-19 medical history, maternal and neonatal specimen testing reports, quarantine questionnaires, mother-baby feeding separation, and assessing the mothers psychiatric illnesses and neuro-behavioural disorders of the child in particular.

While there is no conclusive evidence of vertical transmission of SARS-COV-2, in order to reduce the risk of infection, healthcare professionals and researchers must focus more on the mental health of pregnant women, infant feeding, and closeness to the parents. This will aid in the early development of the new born, reducing stress on the mother.

Keywords: Psychological stress, newborn, new mother, covid-19

INTRODUCTION

There is no indication that covid-19 has a long-term effect on pregnancy, the mother's psychiatric condition, or the infant's developmental delay. Between May 1st and July 31st 2020, 72 pregnant patients with covid-19 took part in a study that took place in different locations. Since giving birth or undergoing an abortion, these woman patients engaged in three-month follow-up surveys. The data was collected from Covid-19 medical history, maternal and neonatal specimen testing reports, quarantine questionnaires, mother-baby feeding separation, and assessing the mothers psychiatric illnesses and neuro-behavioural disorders of the child in particular.¹

While there is no conclusive evidence of vertical transmission of SARS-COV-2, in order to reduce the risk of infection, healthcare professionals and researchers must focus more on the mental health of pregnant women, infant feeding, and closeness to the parents. This will aid in the early development of the new born, reducing stress on the mother.²

This study was conducted simultaneously on a total of 138 pregnant women. This study was conducted between MAY 1 AND JULY 31, 2020 on women who were COVID-19 positive i.e. confirmed cases from an authoritative body. Of these 138 women almost 61% of them i.e. 84 cases were from the worst affected area of the pandemic in the country. These women were asked to take part in a follow-up survey for three months after giving birth or having an abortion. With an assay of nasal and pharyngeal swab specimens via RT-PCR checks, the women were determined to be positive/suspected cases of COVID-19. The women were informed and gave their consent to participate in the study. The women were chosen based on the following factors: (a) COVID-19 onset before or after birth, and (b) those that did not turn/lost on follow-up.

METHODS OF STUDY

STUDY DESIGN AND PARTICIPANTS:

The COVID-19 pandemic has been the most severe global public health epidemic of this generation, and it is expected to continue for some time. A few literatures have been recorded on the impact of COVID-19 on pregnant patients in various countries, and this describes the clinical features of COVID-19-infected patients, potential medical risks such as severe illness, ICU admissions, and receipt of medical admission, or mother-to-baby direct transmission /vertical transmission, and the impact on the maternity. As a result of the disruption of health systems and decreased access to nutritious and nutritional food, this pandemic will result in child and maternal deaths, especially among women in low- and middle-income countries around the world. Pregnancy is a unique time in which women's immune and physiologic systems undergo changes that may exacerbate their psychological distress.^{1,3} The apprehension and uncertainty about the short and long term effects on themselves and their babies may be exacerbated by the testing of COVID-19 in a pregnant woman along with the infection. This will exacerbate the pregnant woman's psychological discomfort and mood swings as a result of the infection. The infection during pregnancy can have a long-term effect on the mother's mental health and the infant's neurobehavioral growth. Quarantine, whether mandatory or optional, may have detrimental effects on both the mother and the child as a result of the infection, which may affect the infant's feeding and early growth. While there is no factual evidence on the long term /chronic effects of COVID-19 in pregnancy, both researchers and frontline health professionals/workers believe that more attention should be paid to the disease's long-term impact on pregnant patients and their infants.⁴

Actually, the study's aim was to determine the long-term impact of COVID-19 on pregnant women, new borns, psychological well-being, and neurobehavioral development of the infant, as well as to investigate the bonding/association between the mother and the child/new born as a result of the separation during quarantine and the impact on the child's development, in order to provide insight into how to improve health care. During the COVID-19 pandemic, on new mothers and their infants.

PROCEDURES

The study's protocol entailed gathering data from the patient at four different points and then assembling it based on the information provided by the patient. The information was gathered from medical records of hospitalised deliveries, with COVID-19 findings screened in various neo-natal and maternal specimens. The stress, or post-traumatic stress disorder, of the women in the study was measured using a variety of checklists.⁴

Since the study was performed on such a small population, it was discovered that one-third of pregnant patients infected in the first trimester and one-third of pregnant patients infected in the second trimester had an abortion for a maternal reason, and nearly 90% chose a caesarean section

for delivery.⁵⁻⁷ Just one neonate/infant was found to be positive for throat swab RT-PCR 36 hours after birth in this study, but was found to be negative in subsequent studies⁸⁻¹⁴.

CONCLUSION

COVID-19 is not a fore warning that a pregnancy should be terminated because there is no concrete proof of infection transfer from the mother to the newborn. To reach a conclusion, further research and data on the mental health of pregnant women must be gathered, as well as an assessment of the pandemic's long-term impact on maternal and offspring during the COVID-19 outbreak. Researchers and health care professionals should pay greater attention to maternal mental health, child feeding closeness to the mother, and early development in addition to controlling infection risk.

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