

**A STUDY ON ANEMIA ASSOCIATED DIETARY HABITS AMONG
PREGNANT WOMEN ATTENDING ANTENATAL CARE SERVICES AT MOH
ANURADHAPURA**

T.N. Hettiarachchi* and I.A.M. Leena

Faculty of Indigenous Medicine University of Colombo, Sri Lanka.

*1803709@iim.stu.cmb.ac.lk

Anemia is a condition in which the number of red blood cells or the hemoglobin concentration is lower than normal. It commonly develops during pregnancy, with nutritional factors playing a key role. This study aimed to determine the prevalence of anemia among pregnant women and its association with dietary habits. A cross-sectional survey study was conducted among 78 pregnant women attending antenatal care services at MOH - Nuwaragam Palatha East (NPE), Anuradhapura. Sample size was calculated using the formula $N=Z^2 \times P(1-P)/D^2$, assuming a 95% confidence level. Ethical Clearance was obtained from the Ethics Review Committee of Faculty of Indigenous Medicine, University of Colombo (ERC/UG 24/292). Data were collected using an Interviewer-administered questionnaire and maternal hemoglobin levels were obtained from individual pregnancy records. Inclusion criteria were; pregnant women attending ANC at MOH- NPE Anuradhapura and consenting to participate. Hb concentration less than 110 g/l is considered as anemic. Exclusion criteria were; those who did not consent, had pregnancy complications (such as GDM, history of miscarriages etc.) and had chronic medical or psychiatric illnesses. The prevalence of anemia was 34.6%, with 81.5% being mildly anemic and 18.5% being moderately anemic. Anemia was significantly associated with meal pattern and age ($p < 0.05$), where young mothers aged 20-29 years were mostly affected. All participants were non-vegetarian. Although tea/coffee consumption was not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), the timing of consumption appeared influential. 96.2% of mothers have adequate dietary diversity. Non-dietary factors like Thalassemia and chronic diarrhea also showed a significant association with anemia.

Keywords: Anemia, Pregnancy, Dietary habits, Antenatal care, Survey