



A STUDY ON ANEMIA RELATED KNOWLEDGE AMONG ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN A RURAL AREA

Management

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ABSTRACT

To determine the nutritional knowledge among the adolescent girls in the study was undertaken 100 adolescent girls in a rural area Ranipet. A questionnaire has been developed to collect the demographic profile of the subjects, food habits of the subject was used. Most of the subjects were within the age range of 14-17 years, living in a nuclear family, having non vegetarian food habits and belong to the middle income group. The mean height of the subjects was 152 ± 8 cm and 45 ± 9 kg. 63% of the subjects were normal and 33% subjects were underweight. Most of the subjects were having faulty food habits. Only 35% of the subjects were having good knowledge about anaemia. The results show that the nutrition education intervention is required for the adolescents to create awareness and to disseminate the knowledge related to the prevention and management of anaemia.

KEYWORDS

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence has been defined by World Health Organization as the period of life spanning the ages between 10 to 19 years. This is the formative period of life when the maximum amount of physical, psychological, and behavioural changes takes place. This is the vulnerable period in the human life cycle for the development of nutritional anaemia, which has been constantly neglected by public health programs. Girls are more likely to be a victim due to various reasons like limited resources and the added burden of menstrual blood loss, normal or abnormal and poor food habits. The prevalence of under nutrition and anaemia among adolescent girls is alarmingly high in India. Adolescent girls are at a greater risk of reproductive morbidity and mortality. To reduce the burden of anaemia in adolescent population Government of India started WIFS scheme for all adolescent girls. Anaemia is a condition in which the number of red blood cells consequently their oxygen carrying capacity is insufficient to meet all the body's physiologic needs which are vary with a person's age, gender, altitude, smoking and different stages of pregnancy. There are about 1.2 billion adolescents in the world, which is equal to 1/5 of the world's population and their numbers are increasing. Out of these, 5 million adolescents are living in developing countries. The world's adolescent population is facing a series of serious nutritional challenges which are not only affecting their growth and development but also their livelihood as adults. However, Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA) for micronutrients is not met through diet or supplements. It is mandatory that proper and sustained dietary and behavioural changes should be made to alleviate micronutrient malnutrition. For the development of intervention programme there is a need to assess the existing knowledge level of the subjects therefore, the present study has been conducted to assess the anaemia and prevention management related knowledge of the adolescents.

AIM

To assess the knowledge regarding anaemia and prevention management among the adolescent girls.

METHODOLOGY

Hundred adolescent girls were randomly selected to assess their knowledge level related to anaemia and prevention management. A structured questionnaire developed to assess demographic profile and food habits. Anaemia related knowledge and prevention management was assessed by using a pretested questionnaire. Height and weight of the subjects was measured by the standardized methods. The data has been analysed by suitable statistical method.

RESULTS

In the study subjects more than 50% of the subjects were in the age range of 14-16 years, 87% were living in a nuclear family, most of them were non vegetarian and belongs to middle incoming group (table 1). The table 2 shows that the average height of the subjects was

156 ± 8 , average weight was 45 ± 9 , and average BMI $19.5\text{hg}/\text{m}^2$. The nutritional status of the subjects has been assessed and it was found that 63% of the subjects were normal, 33% underweight, 3% of subjects were overweight and 1% subject was obese. In anaemia related knowledge assessment, 50% of subjects were having good knowledge about anaemia and 35% were having fair knowledge and rest 15% of subjects were having poor knowledge about anaemia. More than 50% of the girls having knowledge about the definition of anaemia, hemoglobin, common symptoms of anaemia. Only 30% of girls know about the sources of anaemia. Very few girls know about the normal hemoglobin levels and the consequences of anaemia. They don't know about the serious consequences of untreated anaemia. Only 17% girls know about anaemia prophylaxis programme which is running in India. The electronic media and press were the major source of information.

Table 1 Demographic profile of the subjects

Variables	VARIABLE	Frequency (n=100)
Age	14-15years	85
	16-17years	15
Family Income	10,000	44
	15,000	14
	20,000	15
	>25,000	27
Type of family	Joint	13
	Nuclear	87
Dietary History	Vegetarian	5
	Non vegetarian	95

Table 2 Anthropometric Measurements of the subjects

Variables	Results	
Measurements	Height (cms)	152 ± 8
	Weight (kgs)	45 ± 9
	BMI	19.5 ± 2
Nutritional Status	Under weight	33%
	Normal	63%
	Overweight	3%
	Obese	1%

CONCLUSION

There is need to include iron rich food in diet of adolescence. Grams, maize, mustard leaf, milk and red meat, spinach should eat to gain normal body mass index. Iron pot used for cooking can also increase iron in the diet. Counselling can be done to empower adolescents to make understand the importance of precaution measures to avoid anaemia in adulthood. Training programme should be organized to make people aware about fortification of food as well as importance of iron for adolescence. To start health education sessions with more focus on specific issues and information on anaemia, general information, such as adverse effects of drinking tea with meals in

reducing the absorption of iron and about side effects of misuse or over use of iron pills especially those women who don't follow a doctor's prescription and health instructions. To plan for these types of programme, information about basic health parameter about anaemia in women and children needed, how they have changed over time.

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