

# Medical Health Care Provider's Attitude and Knowledge of Association Between Oral Health and Pregnancy Outcomes

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of this study were to examine the level of awareness of common oral diseases during pregnancy and its impact over pregnancy outcomes and the importance of oral health among medical health care providers among Chennai, India. This study was a cross sectional, self administered questionnaire survey which was done among 150 medical health care providers of Chennai, India. The questionnaire assessed the knowledge of medical healthcare providers on importance of oral health and pregnancy outcomes. The results of the study showed moderate awareness of medical health care provider's on importance oral health and its relationship with the pregnancy outcomes. From this study it is evident that 82% of medical health care provider's advise for dental visit during pregnancy. The information that is gleaned from this study demonstrate the knowledge of medical health care provider's on oral health and pregnancy and it is also necessary to be updated with time and get actively involved in advising the pregnant patient to have oral health to have a good time during pregnancy.

**Keywords:** Cross sectional study, Oral health during pregnancy.

## INTRODUCTION

Oral diseases and conditions are widely prevalent and they are largely preventable if treated at proper time. Pregnancy involves complex hormonal as well as physical changes which will have an impact over many organ systems in our body including the oral cavity.

The primary oral problem during pregnancy is the gingivitis and periodontal infections<sup>1</sup>. It is important for a women to get known about these various changes in the gums and teeth atleast through their general medical health care provider.

But the health care providers often do not provide oral health care to a pregnant women. At the same time pregnant women with obvious signs of oral diseases, often do not receive or seek oral care.

## Subject and methods

The importance of the study was to examine the level of awareness of common oral diseases during pregnancy and its impact over pregnancy outcomes and the importance of oral health among medical health care providers among Chennai, India. Theoretically it is known that the periodontal disease during pregnancy may lead to adverse consequences like pre-term birth and



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low birth weight<sup>2</sup>. So medical healthcare providers should be aware of the importance oral health during pregnancy. So this criteria is estimated on a cross sectional study which was carried out in the city of Chennai, South India. The sample consisted of 150 randomly selected medical practitioners with basic degree in medicine(MBBS), Post graduate student in medical field with an half of population with an average experience of lesser than 10years.

According to the sampling technique described above, after explaining the purpose of the study the questionnaires were handed over to them to rate it by themselves. After their responses they were evaluated and ranked accordingly as positive and negative response of knowledge about awareness on oral health and pregnancy outcomes.

## RESULT

The sample size of 150 health care providers

Question	Positive	Negative
Advising to delay dental visit after pregnancy	123	27
Is that pregnancy increases the tendency for the gums to bleed,swell or be red	127	23
Is that dental problems could affect pregnancy outcomes	106	44
Is there a connection between health of teeth and gums and pregnancy	106	44
Is that scaling and root planning is safe during pregnancy as a periodontal management	112	38

In this sample tested there appears to be moderate awareness of medical healthcare provider's attitude and knowledge on importance of oral health during pregnancy and its influence on pregnancy outcomes. From this study it is evident that 82% of medical health care provider's advised for dental visit during pregnancy.

## DISCUSSION

The common oral health conditions during pregnancy is that pregnancy gingivitis, benign oral gingival lesions like epulis of pregnancy etc, periodontitis, tooth erosion. From this study it is

evident that 82% of health care provider suggest dental visit during pregnancy and about 70% of health care provider's have a knowledge about relationship between oral health and pregnancy outcomes. The results of this study clearly demonstrate that most of the general health care providers have sound knowledge on oral health awareness on pregnancy outcomes, even some are not considering a lot on importance of oral health during pregnancy. It is also incumbent upon practioners to keep their knowledge updated with time and get actively involved in advising the pregnant patient to have oral health to have a good time during pregnancy, because oral cavity is the mirror of systemic conditions.

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