

Oral Health Practices During Pregnancy

Li-Lan Chuang, Chang Gung University of Science and Technology, Taiwan

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Abstract

Background: Poor oral health might associate with adverse pregnancy outcomes. Little is known about oral hygiene practice and obtaining dental services during pregnancy in Taiwan. The purpose of this study was to explore women's oral hygiene practices and barriers in obtaining dental care during their pregnancies. **Methods:** A cross-sectional design was employed at one medical center in northern Taiwan. Participants were recruiting after giving birth between one and three days. Questionnaires included demographic sheet, oral care practice during pregnancy, diet sheet during pregnancy, and Oral Health Impact Profile. **Results:** A total of 100 postpartum women participated to this study. Most participants did not obtain dental care and did not receiving dental information during prenatal visits. Barriers to dental care included lack of knowledge about oral health during pregnancy, low priority given to dental care, misconceptions about the safety and appropriateness of dental care during pregnancy. **Conclusions:** Most pregnant women need more information about oral health. Misconceptions about the appropriateness of oral health care during pregnancy may affect women's access to and use of oral health care. Given the implications of poor oral health on possible adverse birth outcomes and attention to oral health misconceptions is warranted.