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Evaluation of Smoking Status and Knowledge of the Harmful Effects of Smoking Among Pregnant Women in Erzurum

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Objectives: Approximately one in ten women smokes cigarettes during pregnancy. This study was conducted to assess smoking status and knowledge about the risks associated with smoking among pregnant women in an eastern province of Turkey.

Methods: The study included pregnant women who presented to family health centers affiliated with the Erzurum Public Health Directorate and to the obstetrics outpatient clinic and inpatient ward of the Atatürk University School of Medicine. The sample size was calculated as 500 people for 99% confidence interval based on a smoking prevalence of 9%.

Results: Based on self-reported smoking status, 60 (12.0%) of the pregnant women were active smokers, 26 (5.2%) had quit smoking before pregnancy, and 414 (82.8%) were nonsmokers. When questioned about their knowledge of the harmful effects of smoking on the mother and fetus, 176 pregnant women (35.2%) had no idea or stated that cigarette smoking did not harm the baby. Twelve (20%) of the pregnant smokers experienced threatened preterm labor or threatened miscarriage. Evaluation of the pregnant women's education levels showed that 25 (41.6%) had undergraduate or postgraduate education. Pregnant women whose partners smoked were significantly more likely to smoke compared to those with nonsmoking partners ($p<0.001$).

Conclusion: Smoking is a major factor in fetal and maternal health and is more prevalent among pregnant women with high sociocultural level and those whose partners smoke. Our findings indicate that pregnant women were not adequately informed about the harmful effects of smoking during pregnancy. Programs should be implemented before and during pregnancy in Turkey to increase women's awareness of the dangers of smoking.

Keywords: Pregnancy, risk, smoking