

ABSTRACT

All women are at potential risk of complications during pregnancy, delivery or pregnancy termination and puerperium. Many of these complications cannot be predicted in advance. But women in developing countries generally believed that pregnancy is a natural phenomenon and complications during pregnancy are also considered as being natural to pregnancy. These lead to low utilization of health care services and often with maternal deaths due to untreated complications. Adequate knowledge and awareness on pregnancy complications is crucial for saving lives of women from preventable causes of maternal death. Existence of knowledge can be transferred into action like health seeking behavior such as birth preparedness and readiness for complications.

Objective of this study is to explore knowledge of pregnancy complications and birth preparedness among emergency obstetric cases admitted to Natogyi township hospital, during first six months of 2010. A cross sectional study was conducted. A total of one hundred emergency obstetric cases were selected after reviewing hospital records by consecutive sampling method. Cases were traced and interviewed by using structured questionnaire. The current study presented knowledge on antenatal care, awareness on pregnancy related complications and practice on birth preparedness. Findings revealed that forty seven percent of women had knowledge on appropriate time for antenatal care first visit but 45.5% took antenatal care by appropriate time. Forty seven percent of women took visit four times and above antenatal care and that are similar to those of some countries in South East Asia Region.

Importance of skilled health personnel in pregnancy care and delivery care was recognized by higher proportion. Possibility of complications or danger signs during pregnancy, delivery and immediate afterbirth was accepted by most of women. High birth plan score was mostly taken by respondents of college/ university education level. Knowledge on pregnancy complications and birth preparedness were unsatisfactory in women of low education level group. These findings call upon to recommend that health promotion on antenatal care knowledge and birth preparedness should be emphasized in women of low level education and low income group. In addition, findings from this study may be enabling to support further studies on routine pregnancy care and emergency obstetric care.