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REASONS FOR THE INFLUENZA VACCINE REFUSAL AMONG PREGNANT WOMEN

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UKRAINE

Vaccination of pregnant women against influenza is a very relevant topic in family medicine. Due to immunological and physiological changes in pregnant women, the risk of susceptibility to infections of various genesis increases. Changes in the immune system are associated with hormones, cytokines and immune cells, as well as endometrial remodelling. Despite these changes, antibody response to influenza after natural infection and vaccination does not seem to differ between pregnant and not-pregnant women. A disease that occurs in the context of influenza can cause miscarriage, stillbirth, premature birth, and low birth weight. To prevent these complications, immunization of pregnant women is necessary, since influenza vaccination can act as direct protection for pregnant women and as passive immunity for infants under 6 months of age through maternal antibodies.

There is a fairly large percentage of women around the world who do not get vaccinated during pregnancy because they are not well informed about influenza and the vaccine, regardless of their geographic location.

Therefore, the purpose of the study, which was conducted in Italy by Emilia Prospero, Sara Galmozzi and other doctors, was to investigate the factors associated with non-compliance with global recommendations for influenza vaccination by pregnant women in this country.

From October 2016 to January 2017, during the seasonal epidemic of influenza, a self-administered, closed-ended survey was conducted among pregnant women in one of Italian regions. Key questions in the survey included the origin of pregnant women, socio-demographic characteristics, their knowledge and attitudes toward the vaccine, and whether they had already been vaccinated or not. In addition, a multivariate analysis was conducted to control for factors that prevent women from getting vaccinated.

According to the survey, 366 women took part in the research, and 348 of them said they had not been vaccinated against influenza during the 2016-2017 epidemic season. Concerns about vaccine side effects were the most common reason for not getting vaccinated. It turned out that the level of knowledge about influenza was low. The analysis also showed that women have a very low preference for vaccination due to insufficient promotion of immunization by healthcare professionals.

Physicians play a crucial role in helping women during pregnancy, so their active involvement in disseminating information about vaccination is essential. There is a

need to improve the level of knowledge of health care workers about pregnancy and immunization interdependence, as well as their communication skills to ensure quality information for their patients.

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