

## **The Prevalence and Factors Associated with Iron Deficiency Anemia in Anemic Pregnant Women**

Rehab Merza, MD, FPRP\* Ruqaya Alekri, MD, FPRP\*\* Shayma Alekri, MD, FPRP\*\*\*  
Azhar Alsaleh, MD, FPRP\*\*\*\* Faisal Alnasir, FRCGP, MICGP, FFPH, PhD\*\*\*\*\*

### **ABSTRACT**

**Background:** Iron deficiency anemia is one of the most prevalent nutritional disorders worldwide affecting the general health and millions of pregnant women.

**Objective:** To evaluate the prevalence and the risk factors of iron deficiency anemia among pregnant women.

**Design:** A Cross-Sectional Study.

**Setting:** Five Health Centers in Bahrain.

**Method:** Three hundred sixty-six pregnant women were included in the study during June 2012. The pregnant women were recruited during their antenatal visit. The personal characteristics, pregnancy and dietary information were documented. In addition, hemoglobin and serum ferritin level were determined.

**Result:** Ninety-six (26.2%) women had anemia; 19 (19.79%) women had iron deficiency anemia. The main risk factors were lower educational level and close birth space ( $\leq 2$  years). The condition was found to be more prevalent among non-Bahraini pregnant women than Bahraini women. Serum ferritin level was found to decrease significantly with increasing age; eating three main meals regularly was associated with an increase in SF level.

**Conclusion:** In a sample of three hundred sixty-six pregnant women, ninety-six (26.2%) women had anemia and only 19 (19.79%) women had iron deficiency anemia; it is more common among non-Bahraini pregnant women. Lower educational level and close birth space ( $\leq 2$  years) were the main risk factors.