

Peripartum Cardiomyopathy: A five year hospital-based analytical study

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Objective: To review the incidence, epidemiological characteristics, diagnosis and management of peripartum cardiomyopathy.

Design: Retrospective analytical study of all cases, which were diagnosed as peripartum cardiomyopathy (PPCM) among the maternity admissions between January 1st 1999 and December 31st 2003.

Setting: Salmaniya Medical Complex (SMC), which is the main referral hospital in Bahrain; where approximately 80% of all deliveries in the Kingdom are performed.

Methods: We reviewed all maternity admissions who developed cardiac or respiratory complications in the five year period, including those happened in the last four weeks of antepartum, intrapartum, or the first week of the postpartum periods. These have been drawn by diagnosis from the records departments, the labor room records and the ICU register and the information's then transferred to special forms.

Result: The incidence is comparatively low at 1/17,500. The age ranged between 23 to 45 years and the onset was between 38 weeks of pregnancy and early post partum period. No evidence of underlying cardiac disease has been found in any of the patients reviewed.

Conclusion: Among 52,806 deliveries conducted in the SMC and associated hospitals during the five years of this study there were three confirmed cases of PPCM and two doubtful cases. There has been no mortality cases, but the condition is life threatening and costly to treat. Research for the prediction of PPCM among high risk groups like sicklers are being investigated to develop better diagnosis and prevention.