



KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND PRACTICE TOWARDS PRENATAL GENETIC TESTING IN A TERTIARY CARE INSTITUTE IN NORTH INDIA

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INTRODUCTION

Prenatal genetic testing gives information about whether the foetus has certain genetic disorders. It is a developing branch that helps people to make informed medical and lifestyle decisions. The aim of the study was to assess the Knowledge, Attitude and Practice of the North Indian pregnant patients regarding Prenatal Genetic Testing.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

A descriptive cross-sectional study was done on all the antenatal patients coming to the outpatient department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology for their first visit who were ≤ 24 weeks of gestation. A four-part structured questionnaire was developed to assess demographic features, knowledge, attitudes and practice of pregnant patients towards prenatal genetic testing. Data were analysed using a variety of descriptive and inferential statistical tests.

RESULTS

The results showed that majority of patients were from rural background (76%). Their knowledge of prenatal genetic testing was very poor with 95% patients not having any knowledge about it. All (100%) patients said that the doctors provide advice for prenatal genetic testing. The attitudes of the patients towards the testing were good, with the majority (98%) of patients considered prenatal genetic testing to be useful to diagnose and prevent genetic disease. 80% of pregnant patients practiced prenatal genetic testing methods. Out of the 20% patients whose levels of practice were low, were due to lack of knowledge (51%), non-affordability (34%), non-accessibility (15%).

CONCLUSION

This study results showed that people have little knowledge about prenatal genetic testing and further efforts are required to be made to improve knowledge of patients towards Prenatal Genetic Testing. Education is needed to improve awareness, with primary focus on accessibility with reasonable cost, to help population in getting themselves tested thereby preventing many genetic disorders.

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