

Letter to the Editor

The Relation between Diarrhea in Pregnancy and Preterm Birth: A Letter to the Editor

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Gastrointestinal problems are very common during pregnancy, that one of these problems is diarrhea and others are pica, gastroesophageal reflux disease, constipation, and hemorrhoids. However, the question is why these discomforts are very common in pregnant women? Because pregnancy causes physiologic and dramatic anatomic changes in women. These conditions have enough potential that leads to gastrointestinal discomforts such as diarrhea in pregnant women [1]. The general definition of diarrhea is: if the volume of stool is more than 200 ml per day, or the frequency of defecation more than three times a day. Diarrhea can be divided into two types: acute and chronic [2]. The causes of acute diarrhea mostly are bacterial, viral, or parasitic infections. Most sequence of acute diarrhea are mild and self-limited. Nevertheless, the patient with uncomplicated self-limited acute diarrhea should be treated with supportive treatment such as maintaining hydration, symptomatic relief, restoration of fluid losses, correction of electrolyte abnormalities, and dietary changes. Many antidiarrheal drugs are safe during pregnancy [3]. If the patient is extremely ill or the symptoms of diarrhea are last for more than 7 days, or the patient has significant rectal bleeding, the cause of infectious diarrhea need

to be pursued [4]. Evidence shows that maternal infection and inflammation are major causes of spontaneous preterm birth [5]. Because diarrhea occurs due to infection, it can be said that if diarrhea occurs in pregnant women, it can lead to preterm birth. However, it is recommended that clinical trial studies be performed in this area to confirm or refute this hypothesis.

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