NUTRITIONAL STATUS AND DIETARY INTAKE OF FILIPINO WOMEN OF REPRODUCTIVE AGE: ARE THEY NUTRITIONALLY READY TO SUPPORT THEIR BABY?

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Background:

The maternal mortality ratio for women of reproductive age (WRA), 15 to 49 years old, in Southeast Asian countries is alarmingly high at 140 per 100,000 live births. In the Philippines it was reported to be 114 per 100,000 live births. Optimal maternal nutrition is important for the survival of both the mother and child consequently to reduce maternal mortality and improve birth outcomes.

Objectives:

This study evaluated the dietary intake and nutritional status of Filipino WRA. Specifically, the study determined the proportion of malnourished WRA, assessed the food, energy and nutrient intakes and identified intake deficiencies and excesses.

Methods:

Data used in this study were taken from Anthropometric, Biochemical, and Individual Food Consumption survey components of the 8th National Nutrition Survey in 2013. Analysis was disaggregated into age group and physiological status. Data were organized and processed using STATA version 12.

Results and Findings:

More than one-third of the adolescent non-pregnant non-lactating women were thin (34.2%), one-fourth of lactating adolescent were also thin (26.4%), and about two-fifths of pregnant adolescents were nutritionally at-risk (38.9%). WRA who were pregnant and the lactating had poor energy and nutrient intakes. Micronutrient deficiencies, particularly anemia, IDD and VAD, were likewise more prevalent among pregnant and lactating women.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

Filipino WRA are more likely to be nutritionally unprepared to support their baby as a considerable proportion suffer from thinness, inadequate energy and nutrient intake and micronutrient deficiencies. Nutrition-specific interventions targeting WRA should be scaled up such as multiple micronutrients supplementation for pregnant mothers and nutrition education on adequate weight gain and dietary intake for adolescents to ensure improvement of health and nutritional status.