

Pattern of Birth Weight of New Born Babies at a Tertiary Care Level

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DEAR EDITOR,

In the present study conducted at a tertiary care level during the period from 2000-2009, the proportion of birth weight (≥ 2.5 kg) of new born babies was 80.8%, low birth weight (< 2.5 kg) of new born babies was 19.2%. Of the new born babies, proportion of very low birth weight (< 2 kg) was 6.9%. In this study, sex wise difference in the proportion of low birth weight new born babies was not significant. But, significant difference occurred in the proportion of newborn babies with weight ≥ 2.5 kg ($P=0.0001$). It indicates that the proportion of males with weight ≥ 2.5 kg was more compared to females. The proportion of low birth weight of new born babies from 2000-2001 to 2008-2009 was increased from 17.8% to 25.09% ($P<0.0001$). At the same time, the proportion of new born babies with weight ≥ 2.5 kg was decreased from 82.2 to 69.8% ($P<0.0001$).

Birth weight is one of the most important factor for estimating the maturity of the newborn, evaluating intrauterine growth and development.^[1] This study indicates that low birth weight is very alarming. In both, the developed and developing countries low birth weight is the most important factor that affects perinatal mortality, neonatal mortality, postnatal mortality, infant mortality and infant and childhood morbidity.^[2] A study of UNICEF reveals that incidence of low birth weight. In Bangladesh 30%, India 26%, Pakistan 21% and

Sri Lanka 25% of new born babies have a high incidence of low birth weight.^[3]

In India, NFHS reported that the proportion of low birth weight babies about 23% for rural and 19% for urban population.^[1] The proportion of low birth weight babies in Kerala study was found to be 18% in the year 1997.^[4] NFHS data^[1] shows that birth weight is influenced in many socio-economic factors like urban or rural, education, birth order, tobacco use by mother, wealth, religion and caste.

In the present study and all other studies mentioned above showed that low birth weight is increasing. Our attention is to concentrate towards how to improve the nation from the fearful unhealthy conditions. Unhealthy people will produce unhealthy nation and it will also affect the development of the nation. Early marriage, early child bearing and nutritional deficiency are the causes of low birth weight. Save the nation from the terrible conditions by conducting health education, awareness programmes, improve the antenatal care and by taking suitable measures. Buildup a healthy people and save Nation.

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