

CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF VAGINAL YEAST INFECTION DURING PREGNANCY

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ABSTRACT

Infections are the common things that is available among women. This usually occur due to lack of proper hygiene. One of these infections is vaginal yeast infection which is caused by fungus. Therefore, this paper aimed at assessing the causes and effects of vaginal yeast infection especially during pregnancy. The paper has objectives of determining most causes of vaginal yeast infection, effect of the infection on pregnancy, and determine level of pregnancy that is exposed to vaginal yeast infection. The research is a survey research and uses research schedules for data collection. Enumerators were picked for the data collection at three (3) hospitals in Nigeria from the lab technicians. Finally, the results show that HIV is among the causes of vaginal yeast infection, use of soaps and other chemicals in washing vagina also causes the infection, lack of proper hygiene as we as during oral sex with a man who is having a mouth candidiasis.

Keywords: *Infection, Pregnancy, Vaginal Yeast Infection, HIV, Candidiasis*

I. INTRODUCTION

Vaginal infection is also known as vaginitis. It is the irritation of the vagina that usually causes changes in vaginal discharge, itching, odour and other signs. Most women have some vaginal discharge that keeps the vagina clean and moist. Normal discharge has a mild odour and should be clear, white or yellow. It may leave a yellowish colour on women underpants when it dries. However, this discharge tends to become abnormal showing sign of vaginal infections. Some of these are change in the amount, colour or odour of vaginal discharge, itching or burning around the vagina burning when urinating, an urge to urinate more often, sores or warts near the vaginal opening, painful sexual intercourse, chills or fever and stomach or abdominal pain or cramping [1].

Yeast infection are caused by overgrowth of an otherwise normal vaginal fungus called candida albicans. Vaginal yeast is also called vaginal candidiasis which is relatively common during pregnancy. Higher estrogen levels during pregnancy make vagina to produce more glycogen which then makes it even easier for yeast to grow [2].



Vaginal yeast infections are not considered as sexually transmitted infection. The fungus can as well spread through mouth to genital contact. Medications can effectively treat vaginal yeast infections. If you have recurrent yeast infections appearing for more than four times a year, you may need a longer treatment course and a maintenance plan.

Yeast infections of vagina can be spread through oral genital contact or during intercourse. They are more common in women who are sexually active. Any activity that can cause changes in normal vagina flora including douching can contribute to a yeast infection. Poor diet and lack of sleep may also increase the risk.

Pregnancy causes increased in levels of progesterone and estrogen. The progesterone suppresses the ability of neutrophils to combat candida and estrogen disrupts the integrity of vaginal epithelial cells against such pathogens. This issue continues throughout the pregnancy and lend themselves to multiple re-occurrence of infection.

Therefore, this research aimed to examine the level of vaginal yeast infection to pregnant women. This can be achieved with the following objectives:

- i. To identify the most causes of vaginal yeast infection
- ii. To determine the effects of vaginal yeast infection on the pregnancy
- iii. To determine the level of pregnancy period that is expose to vaginal yeast infection among pregnant women

II. METHODOLOGY

The paper is a survey research that is experimental, it make use of the report on the samples collected by the lab technicians. The data were collected using research schedules. Enumerators were chosen from three hospitals in Nigeria to collect the data from the lab technicians. The results were presented using tables.

III. RESULTS

This section presents the results of the data collected from the enumerators based on the research schedules. The schedule is arranged with questions based on the objectives of the paper. The results are presented as follows:

Table 1: Causes of vaginal yeast infection

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| Some of the common causes of vaginal yeast infection include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Immunosuppression (HIV)ii. Use of soaps and chemicals in the vaginaiii. Cancer patients on chemotherapyiv. Lack of proper hygienev. Oral sex where a man has mouth candidiasis |
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The above table provide some of the causes of vaginal yeast infection. Women living with HIV are likely to be infected with vaginal yeast due to the inability of their immune system to resists some of the bacteria that will be



growing inside the vagina. Some women have attitude of washing their vagina with soap and chemicals, this sometimes causes yeast infection too. The table also shows that women that engages into oral sex are likely to be exposed to vaginal yeast infection. This can occur in a case where the man is having a mouth candidiasis. It will happen as a result of the contact between the open wound in the mouth with the vagina. However, the result shows that pregnant women are also exposed to the above causes. There are no specific causes for pregnant women.

Table 2: Effects of vaginal yeast infection on the pregnancy

The results show that pregnant women with vaginal yeast infection suffer a lot at the early stage of the pregnancy. It sometimes leads to the miscarriage. However, it can be prevented by taking some antibiotics and vaginal tablets that are not harmful to pregnancy.

Table 3: level of pregnancy period that is expose to vaginal yeast infection among pregnant women

The result shows that all the three (3) levels of pregnancy are exposed to vaginal yeast infection (i.e. 1st trimester, 2nd trimester, and 3rd trimester). But the 1st trimester is the critical among them because it may lead to the lost or damage of the pregnancy.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Vagina is one of the critical organ in women that is easily exposed to bacteria and infections. This usually occur as a result of improper hygiene and application of external materials that might easily generate bacteria and fungi. Pregnant women are also exposed to some of these infections if they are not properly taking care of themselves.

Vaginal yeast infection is one of these infections and is occurring as a result of overgrowing of fungus called candida albicans in the vagina. The paper therefore provides the following recommendations:

- i. There is need for counselling to women on the avoidance of using soap and other chemicals in washing their vagina.
- ii. Women living with HIV should constantly maintain the use of their drugs especially ART drugs.
- iii. Pregnant and other women should ensure proper hygiene for themselves.

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