

**AWARENESS, KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEFS OF ANTENATAL EXERCISES IN
SECOND TRIMESTER PREGNANT WOMEN ATTENDING CASTLE
STEET HOSPITAL FOR WOMAN, COLOMBO 8, SRI LANKA**

DMAK Dissanayake¹, HG Kaushika^{1#},
MTN Madurapperuma¹, PDS Senarathne¹,
P Thulasithasan¹, SP Sukirthan¹ and UDP Ratnasiri²

¹Department of Physiotherapy, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences,
General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Sri Lanka

²Castle Street Hospital for Women, Colombo 8, Sri Lanka

[#]*kaushigamage7@gmail.com*

Second trimester of pregnancy is an important period during fetus growth and health of pregnant women. Antenatal exercises during pregnancy are designed to minimize impairments and to promote health while a woman prepares for childbirth. This study was designed to analyze awareness, knowledge and beliefs regarding antenatal exercises in second trimester of pregnant women. A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 250 second trimester pregnant women at Castle Street hospital for women, Colombo. Sociodemographic data, antenatal exercise awareness, knowledge and beliefs were assessed using an interviewer-administered questionnaire. Among 250 participants, 82.4% were aware of the existence of antenatal exercises. Advanced knowledge levels in antenatal exercises were 'poor' (52.4%) compared to general knowledge (22.8%). General knowledge levels had a significant relationship

with religion ($p=0.007$), income level ($p=0.002$) and parity ($p=0.003$). Advanced knowledge was significantly associated with age ($p=0.034$), educational level ($p=0.003$), parity ($p=0.009$) and income level ($p=0.028$). 40.8% of participants had 'favorable' beliefs regarding antenatal exercises. Factors significantly associated with beliefs were income level ($p=0.000$), religion ($p=0.024$) and parity ($p=0.041$). Majority of participants had a satisfactory awareness level and a good general knowledge level regarding antenatal exercises. Advanced knowledge regarding each type of antenatal exercises and engagement in antenatal exercises has not reached a satisfactory level. As educational level, number of pregnancies and age had a significant association with advanced knowledge in antenatal exercises, adequate knowledge may landfill erroneous beliefs.

Keywords: Antenatal Exercises, Second Trimester, Pregnant Women, Awareness, Knowledge, Beliefs