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Seroprevalence and Associated Factors of Varicella Zoster Virus Infection among the Pregnant Mothers Attending to Antenatal Clinic, Teaching Hospital Jaffna

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Varicella Zoster Virus infection is a vaccine preventable disease that leads to adverse outcomes for both mother and child if infected during pregnancy. The purpose of the current study was to determine the seroprevalence and associated factors of Varicella Zoster Virus infection among the pregnant mothers attending the antenatal clinic, Teaching Hospital Jaffna. This is a descriptive cross-sectional study. Blood samples were collected, and associated factors were obtained through an interview-based questionnaire. Seroprevalence for Varicella Zoster Virus IgG antibodies was given as 47.25% from 86 samples out of 182. There was a significant association between clinical variables including self-reported history and self-reported vaccination history. Being a tropical country and without having vaccination programmes for risk groups, the yielded susceptibility rate of 52.75% to Varicella Zoster Virus infection is high. Vulnerable groups for Varicella Zoster Virus infection with adverse effects, including young women, and neonates during birth, should be vaccinated according to appropriately planned and implemented vaccination policies. Further studies need to be performed to confirm seroprevalence and associated factors incorporating a large population.

Keywords: *varicella, seroprevalence, pregnant mothers, associated factors, antenatal, anti VZV IgG*