

## Knowledge and Attitude towards Thalassemia in Reproductive Women with Thalassemic Disease or Carrier

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#### Abstract

- OBJECTIVE :** 1To study knowledge and attitude towards thalassemia in reproductive women who have the disease or are carriers.
2. To assess factors affecting knowledge.
  3. To study knowledge and attitude towards prenatal diagnosis in these women.

**STUDY DESIGN :** A descriptive study.

**SETTING :** University Hospital.

**SUBJECTS :** 150 reproductive women with thalassemic disease or who are carriers. They were either mothers of thalassemic children or were found to have thalassemic disease found to be carrier in the antenatal clinic.

**MAIN OUTCOME MEASURES :** knowledge was evaluated by a pretested questionnaire containing 16 questions. Women were classified as having adequate knowledge in thalassemia if they answered at least 10 questions correctly. Attitude was assessed also by a pretested questionnaire containing 14 questions. Factors associated with knowledge were assessed by univariate analysis using Chi-square statistics. Multiple logistic regression analysis was used as a control for potential confounding effects.

**RESULTS :** Sixty women (40.0%) were defined as having adequate knowledge. Concerning attitude, the 150 women had a good attitude towards thalassemia. Factors affecting knowledge significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) were occupation, sources of knowledge, perception of their thalassemic status, duration after being diagnosed. In the case of prenatal diagnosis, 50.7% of the women knew that thalassemia can be diagnosed before birth, 18.7% knew that prenatal diagnosis has minimal complications and 46.0% knew that pregnancy with severe forms of thalassemia should be terminated.

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**CONCLUSION :** A large proportion of reproductive women thalassemic disease or who were carriers did not have adequate knowledge about thalassemia. We should put more effort in giving knowledge to these groups of women. Special emphasis should be placed on topics which they knew less namely : the effect of having a thalassemic child, inheritance pattern, prevention and control, treatment, and prenatal diagnosis. Further research to choose effective media for giving the knowledge should be conducted.

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