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Breastfeeding guidance during nursing consultation in the prenatal period

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Abstract: To analyze the provision of guidance performed by nurses for primiparous pregnant women during prenatal care on the practice of breastfeeding. It's based on a quantitative cross-sectional cohort research with a descriptive approach. It was held in a Basic Health Unit (BHU), located in the municipality of Glória do Goitá - Pernambuco. The nurse responsible and the pregnant women were interviewed through a questionnaire, with closed questions. According to the questions of the questionnaire, the research was grouped into three main categories: 1) referring to the path of breastfeeding; 2) referring to the age and evaluation offered by a health professional in the prenatal consultation; and, 3) referent to the stimulus practices for pregnant women performed at the BHU. It observed that nurses during prenatal consultation can guide pregnant women about breastfeeding, but more work still needs to be done to obtain higher results to show the action of nutrition, physiotherapy and

the respective treatments, in order to assist in the stagnation of the disease.

Keywords: Nursing. Orientation. Breastfeeding. Health Education

1. Introduction

Breast milk (LM) is considered the ideal and most complete food for the baby in the first years of life because it meets all the nutritional, immunological, and psychological needs of the newborn. It is recommended by the Ministry of Health (MS) that its introduction be made immediately after delivery, in the first hours of the child's life, maintained exclusively until six months and complemented with other foods until the age of two years (WHO, 2013; BRAZIL, 2015).

Milk production is determined by hormonal action during pregnancy and increased when breastfeeding occurs adequately after birth due to effects of suction stumbling stimulus. In addition to the nutritional and protective benefits for healthy growth, breastfeeding forms the basis for biological, cognitive, social and emotional effects on the child's development and provides advantages to maternal health such as the fastest return of their physical form, return of the age, minor chances of developing anemias and reduction of postpartum hemorrhages (BRASIL, 2015).

In Brazil, neonatal mortality rates have been gradually decreasing and one of the great responsible is due to the encouragement and practices of health education aimed at promoting breastfeeding. According to the II Research on the Prevalence of breastfeeding in Brazilian Capitals and the Federal District, Brazil had a prevalence rate of exclusive breastfeeding below 60%, being a percentage lower than the recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO) (BRASIL, 2009). It is believed that it is possible to achieve even lower rates with educational practices at opportune times since prenatal consultations.

Despite the campaigns and incentives aimed at breastfeeding that are guaranteed annually, weaning continues early in Brazil and one of the associated factors is the lack of guidance on breastfeeding during prenatal care (FERREIRA *et al.*, 2018). Nurses' actions in the face of educational work and guidance during periods involving the practice are highlighted, due to the needs of the actions of nursing health professionals who act in the process of encouraging AM and health promotion, aiming at reducing infant morbidity and mortality and early weaning (ALVES *et al.*, 2018; SILVA *et al.*, 2019).

The nurse is essential to guide pregnant women in prenatal consultations on benefits of breast milk for the mother-baby binomial, to demonstrate how to breastfeed, the time to eat other complementary foods, possible complications that may happen resulting from breastfeeding, among other information, so that the pregnant woman is prepared for this moment (BRAZIL, 2015; SILVA *et al.*, 2019). In this perspective, the commencing between nurse and pregnant women is of paramount importance to build solid foundations in the introduction of breastfeeding, especially in the context

of primary care.

Therefore, the present study aimed to analyze the provision of guidance performed by nurses for primiparous pregnant women during prenatal care on the practice of breastfeeding.

This study will contribute to the improvement of public policies on the theme addressed, since health education is one of the foundations for promoting a healthier society. Therefore, analyzing the orientations of these users on a theme of this magnitude is necessary to provide BHU for future measurements aimed at the knowledge of the population on topics relevant to public health.

2. Methodology

This is a multi-sectional cohort-type quantitative survey with a descriptive approach. It was held in a Basic Health Unit (BHU), located in the municipality of Glória do Goitá - Pernambuco.

The population was composed of pregnant women under prenatal care and the nursing professional responsible for the BHU. Primiparous pregnant women, with any gestational age, between 18 and 40 years of age, were included in the sample and the inclusion criterion of professional was to be registered in this unit and to accompany the pregnant women in the prenatal consultation during the data collection period.

At first, a contact was established with the Municipal Health Department, through its representative, the Secretary of Health, to request the letter of agreement and to complete the purpose of the research, the methodology to be used to achieve its objectives and other pertinent information. Then, the BHU nurse was contacted about the execution of the research in their territory. Similarly, the research proposal was presented to the nurse who intermediated in contact with pregnant women.

A structured interview was conducted through the application of a questionnaire containing closed questions. After collection, a database was constituted in the Microsoft Office Excel 2010 program with the information collected. Subsequently, the data were organized and presented through tables, grouped into percentage values, reflecting the results of the research.

The research followed the ethical principles in accordance with the standards established by Resolution 466/2012 and underwent evaluation by the Ethics and Research Committee (CEPE) of the Pernambuco Health Colleges (FPS) with favorable approval opinion No. 9688138.30000.556.

3. Results and Discussion

The final sample consisted of 22 pregnant women

who agreed to participate in the study. Of the 31 pregnant women who were under follow-up at the prenatal consultation, seven did not meet the selection criteria because they were younger than the established age and two pregnant women refused to participate in the study.

According to the questions of the questionnaire, the research was grouped into three main categories: 1) referring to the path of breastfeeding; 2) referent to the orientation and evaluation offered by a health professional in the prenatal consultation; and, 3) referent to the practices of stimulation for pregnant women performed in the BHU.

Table 1 - Referring to the practice of breastfeeding, Basic Health Unit, Glória do Goitá - Pernambuco.

Questions	Yes		No		Total (%)
	N	%	N	%	
Do you consider breastfeeding important?	22	100%	0	0,00%	22 (100%)
Do you consider it important to encourage the practice of breastfeeding as a public health policy?	15	68,18%	7	31,81%	22 (100%)
Do you know what is the ideal time for breastfeeding exclusively?	20	90,9	2	9,09%	22 (100%)

Source: Prepared by the authors, 2021.

Through the results obtained it was possible to observe that all pregnant women from the BHU investigated consider am as a source of nutrition for the baby to be important. Regarding the perception of importunes of breastfeeding practices and encouragement, 68.18%(N=15) answered that they considered it important and 31.81%(N=7) did not agree. When asked about the ideal time for exclusive breastfeeding (EI) 90.90% (N=20) reported knowing, while 9.09% (N=2) did not know the time indicated for this practice.

Table 2 - Orientation\evaluation provided by a health professional at the prenatal consultation, Basic Health Unit, Glória do Goitá - Pernambuco.

Questions	Yes		No		TOTAL (%)
	N	%	N	%	
Has the nurse evaluated their breasts during the prenatal consultation?	8	36,4%	14	63,6%	22 (100%)
Have you ever been instructed to exercise in the back of the chest?	14	63,6%	8	36,4%	22 (100%)

Source: Prepared by the authors, 2021.

Table 2 expresses the evaluation of the nursing professional in prenatal consultations about the breasts and the pregnant woman. The data show that during the follow-up more than 50% pregnant women did not have their breasts evaluated by the nurse, presenting an index of 63.6% (N=14) in the answers obtained. Regarding the performance of the exercise, the best conduct in the practice of breastfeeding, it was observed that 63.6% (N=14) of the pregnant women confirmed that the practice was guided by the professional during the consultation.

Table 3 - Guidance provided on breastfeeding practices in prenatal consultation, Basic Health Unit, Glória do Goitá - Pernambuco.

Questions	Yes		No		Total (%)
	N	%	N	%	
Is the nursing professional's care in encouraging breastfeeding important to you?	18	81,82%	4	18,18%	22 (100%)
Have you ever been instructed during the prenatal consultation on breastfeeding?	17	77,27%	5	22,73%	22 (100%)

Source: Prepared by the authors, 2021.

When questioning the pregnant women regarding the importance of nursing professional care in encouraging breastfeeding, 81.81% (N=18) stated that this had an important role in their conduct, disagreeing with this opinion a percentage of 18.18% (N=4).

Table 4 - Stimulus practices for pregnant women on Breastfeeding, Basic Health Unit, Glória do Goitá - Pernambuco.

Questions	Yes		No		Total (%)
	N	%	N	%	
Are you participating in a group of pregnant women held in the basic health unit?	2	9,09%	20	90,91%	22 (100%)
Have you ever participated in a lecture at the breastfeeding unit?	8	36,37%	14	63,63%	22 (100%)

Source: Prepared by the authors, 2021.

Regarding the participation in a group of pregnant

women, an instrument of great importance for better deepening of specific themes experienced by pregnant women, including breastfeeding, 90.90% (N=20) answered that they did not participate and 9.09% (N=2) did. When asked if they participated in lectures in the unit on breastfeeding, 63.63% (N=8) did not participate and 36.36% (N=14) stated their participation.

Table 5 - Perception and practice of the nursing professional regarding breastfeeding in prenatal consultations, Basic Health Unit, Glória do Goitá - Pernambuco.

Do you consider it important the nursing professional's assistance in encouraging breastfeeding?
Should breastfeeding be a priority method in feeding the baby?
Do you consider it important to encourage breastfeeding as a public health policy?
Do you think it is important to visit a professional in order to clarify doubts about breastfeeding care?
Do you think your information is crucial for women to perform breastfeeding?
Do you give a lecture to the pregnant women in your unit?
Do you make groups of pregnant women in the unit?

Source: Prepared by the authors, 2021.

In the questionnaire applied to the BHU nurse, shown in Table 5, the nurse answered yes to all alternatives, those referring to the perception of the professional in encouraging and important breastfeeding regarding the performance of a lecture, group for pregnant women, clarification of doubts, among others. The results obtained by the questionnaire applied to the nurse in the sector draw attention, because they present disagreement with the data obtained by pregnant women attended and, in the BHU.

The am continua being a challenge in Brazil and in the whole world, because the indices of early weaning have been increasing every day but, because about 68% of babies are not breastfed with LM exclusively, as recommended by the World Health Organization and MS. Although breastfeeding is a natural act, pregnant women can/should be guided, especially by primary care nurses who configure the first gateway for these pregnant women. In view of this, it is necessary to have educational actions that encourage and denote support to pregnant women to introduce and maintain EM in the first six months of the child's life (VISINTI *et al.*, 2015).

A study conducted by Ferreira and collaborators (2018) identified that more than 50% of women did not receive guidance during prenatal care, in the same way in the present study, which finds a percentage higher than expected. Regarding the knowledge about the ideal time of ESA, the percentage was 90.09%, similar results were found by Visinti *et al.* (2015), which shows that 93% of pregnant women know about breastfeeding time exclusively.

Even with these data, studies show that EMA is not maintained on a large scale and in a desired percentage in Brazil, even with all the orientations offered, during the

months there is a big drop, where in the first month of life there is an index of 82.2% already in the sixth month we have a drop to 37.5%, this fall in most cases is justified by factors with the termination of maternity leave, factors associated with breast problems, first pregnancy, young girls with a mean of 14 to 18 years (BARBIERI *et al.*, 2015).

Regarding the importance of encouraging and practicing breastfeeding in prenatal consultation, a percentage of 68.18% considered by pregnant women as an important practice was obtained in the current study, similar studies corroborate such data and evidence the importance of practices that guide and encourage pregnant women during their follow-up in the BHU (VISINTI *et al.*, 2015).

It rectifies the importance that the professional nurse has to capture the pregnant women to guide and assist in the breastfeeding practice, so that they can drive exclusively until the six months and, after, complement it at the age of two years. Besides, they are professionals trained in showing the practices for a correct handle, appropriate positions, exchange of one pec para the other, como prepare the breast, among other subjects that go through the theme and what influence for a good breastfeeding (BATISTA, FARIAS, MELO, 2013).

Vieira *et al.* (2016) showed that through activities offered in groups of pregnant women there is a wide exchange of information and knowledge sharing among pregnant women, in addition to a moment of interaction, the actions remove doubts and guide new perspectives about the suckling.

In a study, the main support for breastfeeding identified by mothers was nurses (43%), emphasizing the need for greater articulation of these professionals with nursing mothers (GARCIA *et al.*, 2013), with scientific basis and practical skills for the better management and preparation of pregnant women to achieve effective breastfeeding.

Regarding the orientation to exercise for the stimulus of protusion breast beak during prenatal consultation at the BHU, research shows that 23% of the pregnant women were instructed by the nurse to perform the exercise where she stresses that the pregnant woman who has the mouth of the inverted breast perform massage by pulling the beak gently (GARCIA *et al.*, 2013). The reduced number shows that activities as you are should be strengthened by the nursing professional, considering their importance in the effectiveness of the practice of AM.

The literature shows that part of the pregnant women reports that in the prenatal consultation their breasts were not evaluated, so they are unaware of the proper breast preparation (VISINTI *et al.*, 2015). In another study about 39% of pregnant women had their breasts evaluated, this evaluation is very important and is recommended by the MS (CUNHA *et al.*, 2009). The results obtained in this research obtained a high percentage (63.6%) regarding the non-evaluation of the breasts during the prenatal consultation at the BHU, requiring a greater focus of this practice during the approach of the M with the pregnant women.

4. Conclusions

Nurses in their prenatal consultations play a prominent role in the preparation and encouragement of women in the gestational period to provide the best for maternal and child health status. Information and guidance are needed on the M and needs to be passed on in a timely manner to reach future nursing mothers.

It is noticeable that the results found in the research and when compared with other scenarios demonstrate that there is still to improve, but with health education practices and other means of incentive can achieve an effective implementation of the AM.

Nurses are professionals trained to conduct moments that guide pregnant women, whether in prenatal consultations, group of pregnant women, or other moments. Thus, it is necessary to use means and instruments that standardize and systematize the role of the nursing professional in primary health care, in order to provide maternal competencies, strengthening their skills and practices with their child for better and adequate nutrition.

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