

## DIETARY PRACTICES, HEALTH AND NUTRITION STATUS OF INFANTS BORN TO ADOLESCENT MOTHERS IN TRANSMARA WEST, NAROK COUNTY, KENYA

Infant and young child feeding practices contribute to the growth and development of infants as well as preventing the occurrence of common illnesses. Infants should be exclusively breastfed for the first 6 months of life and thereafter introduced to complementary foods according to WHO recommendations. Infants are vulnerable to malnutrition thus nutrition and health status of the infants of young mothers is of interest. The purpose of this study was to determine dietary practices, health and nutrition status of infants born to adolescent mothers in Transmara West, Narok County. A descriptive cross-sectional study design was adopted targeting infants belonging to adolescent mothers in the selected health facilities in Transmara West Sub County. A structured questionnaire was used to obtain information on socio-demographic of both mother and infant, feeding practices, anthropometry, morbidity prevalence and health seeking behavior for the mother. Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS for windows version 24.0 and ENA for SMART survey 2011. Chi-square and Pearson Product Correlation Relationship was used to establish associations between variables at a significance level of  $<0.05$ . The prevalence of wasting, stunting and underweight was 17.1%, 22.0% and 22.0% respectively. About 62.2% of the infants were initiated within the first hour while 50% were exclusively breastfed. Infant illness two weeks before the study, meal frequency and exclusive breastfeeding were significant ( $p<0.05$ ) factors associated with malnutrition. Educational level of the mother did not influence the nutritional status of their infants. The study alluded to the existence of malnutrition among infants of adolescent mothers hence teenage mothers should be educated on child care in order to reduce malnutrition among their infants.

### Keywords

Nutritional status, adolescent mother, feeding practices, infant, health status

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