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Serological Evaluation of HSV-1 and HSV-2 Infection In Pregnancy

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Abstract: We performed a serological evaluation of herpes simplex virus (HSV) infections at the time of labor. In order to determine the seroprevalence of asymptomatic HSV infections in pregnant women, blood samples were collected for antibody measurement from 130 randomly selected pregnant women. Presence of HSV IgG and IgM antibodies in the serum samples was tested by ELISA. The prevalence of HSV-1 gG1 antibodies was 90% (117/130), that of HSV-2 gG2 antibodies was 63.1% (82/130) and that of HSV-2 IgM antibodies was 13.8% (18/130). Eight (44.4%) of the pregnant women with HSV-2 IgM were at the same time found to have HSV-2 IgG antibodies, and 10 (55.6%) women were determined to have HSV-2 IgM antibodies. Furthermore, 6 (4.6%) out of the 130 pregnant women were seronegative for HSV. In conclusion, the results of our study show that the prevalence of HSV-2 infection (63.1%) is relatively high among asymptomatic pregnant women in Adana, Turkey. Therefore, to take precautions for reducing the risk of neonatal herpes, the investigation of HSV-2 type specific antibodies in pregnant women should be offered by using HSV-2 gG2 type specific serological tests that allow the identification of women with asymptomatic or subclinical genital HSV-2 infection and women susceptible to primary genital HSV-2 infection.

Key Words: Genital HSV infection, HSV-2, ELISA, seroprevalence, pregnancy

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