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Short communication

Prevalence of anemia among women: A pilot study

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ABSTRACT

Background: The WHO estimates that more than 1/3rd of world population is anemic, of which iron deficiency anemia (IDA) is most common and serious problem of public health significance. Prevalence of anemia in India is among the highest in the world but within the country prevalence rates differ substantially between different regions. Indian Armed Forces personnel and families form a special class as it includes people from all regions. However, reliable data on the prevalence of anemia in families of naval personnel is scanty. The present study highlights the problem of anemia in non-pregnant wives of serving enrolled personnel of the Indian Navy in the reproductive age group.

Methods: A community based, cross sectional study was carried out at a Naval Base. Physical examination and hemoglobin estimation was done for 257 (100% sample) non-pregnant/non-lactating wives of serving enrolled personnel of the Indian Navy of age between 18 and 45years. Statistical analysis was carried out to estimate the prevalence of anemia.

Results & Conclusion: The prevalence of anemia was found to be 31.90%. Literacy status and Mean BMI of women with anemia was found to be significantly less than subjects without anemia. In conclusion this was a small study conducted to simply assess the prevalence of anemia in wives of naval personnel, which though found much lower than national average is still high at 31.90%. Hence a larger multicentric study is being planned to evaluate the prevalence and factors associated with anemia in families of Armed Forces personnel.

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