

CARBOHYDRATE TOLERANCE IN PREGNANCY WOMEN, STATUS OF SERUM IRON AND SERUM PHOSPHORUS LEVELS IN GESTATIONAL DIABETES MELLITUS CASES: A CASE CONTROL STUDY IN A DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH, INDIA

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Received date: 18 March 2020

Revised date: 08 April 2020

Accepted date: 29 April 2020

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ABSTRACT

Gestational diabetes mellitus is defined as any degree of glucose intolerance with the onset of pregnancy or first recognized during pregnancy (Metzger GE, 1991). Women with gestational diabetes mellitus far exceed the number of pregnant women with pre-existing diabetes, the ratio being approximately 10 to 1. Clinical recognition of gestational diabetes is important because it can be associated with increased prenatal mortality and increase birth trauma, and maternal hypertension (Magee MS et al. 1993). The present study was done to know the incidence of glucose intolerance in pregnant women and to evaluate the relation with serum iron and serum phosphorus. In 50 pregnant women between 24-28 weeks of gestation oral glucose tolerance test (OGTT) with 75-g glucose without regard to recent meal status was done. In the same cases, serum iron and serum phosphorus were measured.

KEYWORDS: Carbohydrate tolerance, serum iron, serum Phosphorus, Gestational Diabetes Mellitus, Andhra Pradesh.

INTRODUCTION

The present study was undertaken to screen for gestational diabetes mellitus and to correlate the levels of serum iron and phosphorus with gestational diabetes mellitus. Finally, an attempt was made to find out the linear correlation between gestational diabetes mellitus and serum iron levels. It is worth remembering the wise statement of Norbert Frenkel that "No single period in human development provides a greater potential than pregnancy for long range pay off via relatively short range period of enlightened metabolic manipulation." Hence prevention of diabetes, "targeting Gestational Diabetes Mellitus is an important step."

The longitudinal changes in carbohydrate metabolism during gestation are integral to a successful pregnancy outcome for both mother and fetus. So, prevention of any disease particularly non communicable diseases include four steps, primary prevention, post primary prevention, secondary prevention and tertiary prevention. The steps taken after diagnosing some form of abnormal glucose tolerance like impaired fasting glucose (IFG) or impaired glucose tolerance (IGT) is called as post primary

prevention. In the prevention of diabetes, most of the published data and success have been in post primary prevention either with life style modification or with drug intervention. What is required is primary prevention; the disease should not develop at all. This may be possible as there are convincing evidences that many of the adult diseases have foetal origin. Hence, for primary prevention the focus should be on intrauterine environment as the preventive medicine starts before birth.

There are two components for the development of any disease, the genetic, and the environmental factors. Of the two, there are evidences to establish the fact that the intra uterine environment plays a vital role in the development of diabetes. Intrauterine exposure to hyperglycemia during the critical period of foetal development programs the development of pancreas relatively and affects insulin secretion function. Further maternal hyperglycemia has a direct effect on the foetal pancreas and is associated with the increased susceptibility to future diabetes in the infant. Women with a history of gestational diabetes mellitus as well as their children are at increased risk of future

diabetes, predominantly type II diabetes (Coustan DR, 1993; Mestman JH et al. 1972).

Pregnancy is a metabolic state often described as a "**Diabetogenic state**" due to an increased plasma concentration of glucose and insulin that occur after a meal relative to increases in plasma glucose and insulin concentrations that occur in non-pregnant individuals. Diabetes mellitus complicates about 1-2% of all pregnancies. It is associated with a high perinatal morbidity and mortality. Before the introduction of insulin, perinatal mortality due to pregnancy related diabetes mellitus is about 65%. However, the rate has fallen drastically with the introduction of insulin by providing good and tight glycaemic control. During pregnancy, there is a significant alteration in glucose homeostasis secondary to the complex hormonal changes and increased metabolic demands of gravid uterus, its contents, and the mother. The rise in the hormones includes oestrogen, progesterone, human placental lactogen, and cortisol that alters this metabolism is largely responsible for the altered homeostasis.

Gestational diabetes mellitus is the most common metabolic abnormality of carbohydrate metabolism of pregnancy occurring in 1-14% of the patients depending a population described and criteria used for diagnosis (WHO, 1985). Gestational diabetes mellitus is defined as carbohydrate intolerance of any degree with onset or first recognition during pregnancy (Metzger BE, 1991). Diagnosis of gestational diabetes mellitus is important to identify both infants at risk of adverse outcomes and women at risk of subsequent development of diabetes. In addition to foetal demise, gestational diabetes mellitus has been linked to the complications of large for gestational age, macrosomia, birth trauma such as increased maternal lacerations and neonatal shoulder dystocia, increased need for operative interference (Sermer M et al. 1995; Coustan DR et al. 1984) and neonatal metabolic disorders such as hypoglycaemia, hyperbilirubinemia and disordered calcium balance. The occurrence of gestational diabetes mellitus may go unrecognized throughout pregnancy unless complications arise and some of these may occur very late. Because gestational diabetes mellitus is associated with adverse effects on the pregnancy and a significant number of patients subsequently develop overt diabetes, it is important to screen for the condition.

The most common cause of anemia is iron deficiency. Iron is needed to form hemoglobin. Iron is mostly stored in the body in the hemoglobin. About 30 percent of iron is also stored as ferritin and hemosiderin in the bone marrow, spleen, and liver. Iron is obtained from foods in our diet, however, only 1 mg of iron is absorbed for every 10 to 20 mg of iron ingested. A person unable to have a balanced iron-rich diet may suffer from some degree of iron-deficiency anemia. An increased iron requirement and increased red blood cell production is required when the body is going through changes such as

growth spurts in children and adolescents, or during pregnancy and lactation. Malabsorption of iron is common after some forms of gastrointestinal surgeries. Most of the iron taken in by foods is absorbed in the upper small intestine. Any abnormalities in the gastrointestinal (GI) tract could alter iron absorption and result in iron-deficiency anaemia. Loss of blood can cause a decrease of iron and result in iron-deficiency anemia. Sources of blood loss may include GI bleeding, menstrual bleeding, or injury. Transitional metals especially iron, which are particularly abundant in the placenta, are important in the production of free radicals. Antioxidants as well as avoidance of iron excess ameliorate maternal and early foetal damage. Most of the body's phosphorus is combined with calcium in the bones, but about 15% exists - as phosphate (PO₄) ions - in the blood and other soft tissues and body fluids. Dietary phosphorus is efficiently absorbed, so a low phosphate level caused by dietary deficiency is unlikely in those on a normal diet unless the person has a malabsorption syndrome (inadequate absorption of nutrients in the intestinal tract). Phosphate levels are controlled by parathyroid hormone and 1, 25-dihydroxy vitamin D. The 1, 25-dihydroxy vitamin D increases absorption of calcium and phosphate in the intestines. **Parathyroid hormone-** Increases calcium and PO₄ release from bone, decreases loss of calcium and increases loss of PO₄ in the urine and Increases conversion of 25-hydroxy vitamin D to 1,25- dihydroxy vitamin D in the kidneys

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In the present study, Oral glucose tolerance test was done in about 50 sample of antenatal cases between 24-28 weeks of gestation who attended the antenatal clinic in G.S.L.Hospital, Rajahmundry. Along with oral glucose tolerance test serum iron, serum phosphorous and hemoglobin were estimated in the same patients. Oral glucose tolerance test is a well-standardized test, and is highly useful to diagnose diabetes mellitus. Patient was kept on fasting after 8pm previous night and a sample of blood is collected in the fasting state. Then the patient is asked to drink 75-g of glucose solution. After 2-hr post glucose samples of blood was taken.

Blood samples (2 mL) were collected under medical supervision from the subjects with an informed consent at diabetic care unit, GSL general hospital, Rajahmundry, AP, India.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

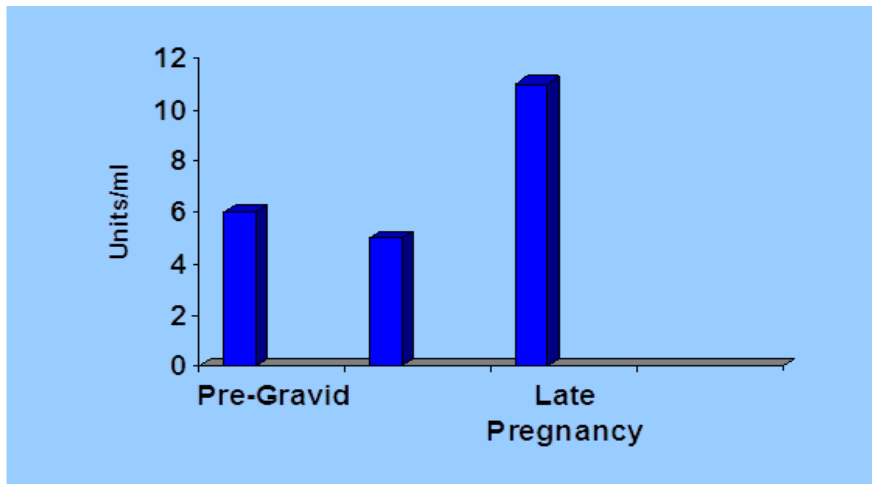


Fig. 1: Changes In Fasting Insulin Concentrations.

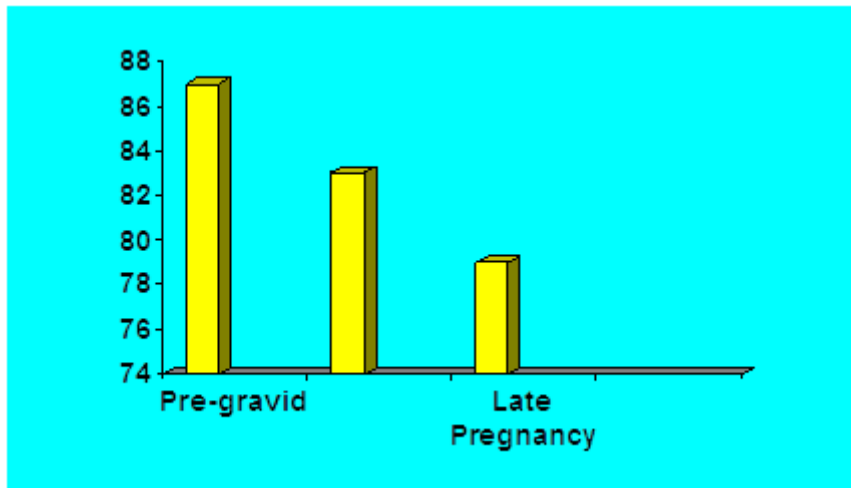


Fig. 2: Changes in Fasting Glucose Concentrations.

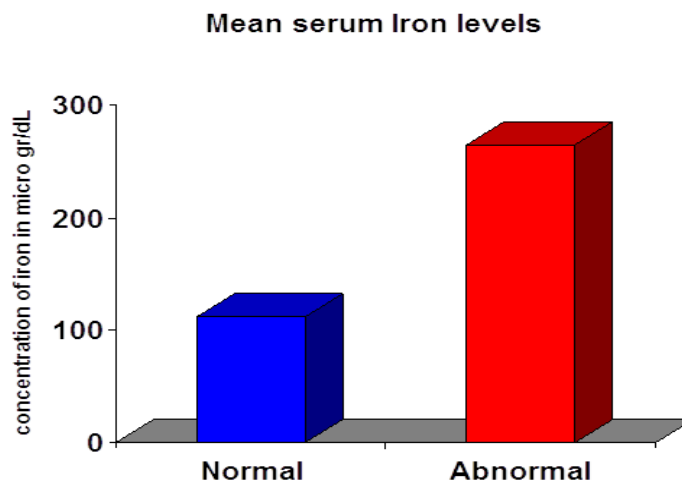


Fig. 3:

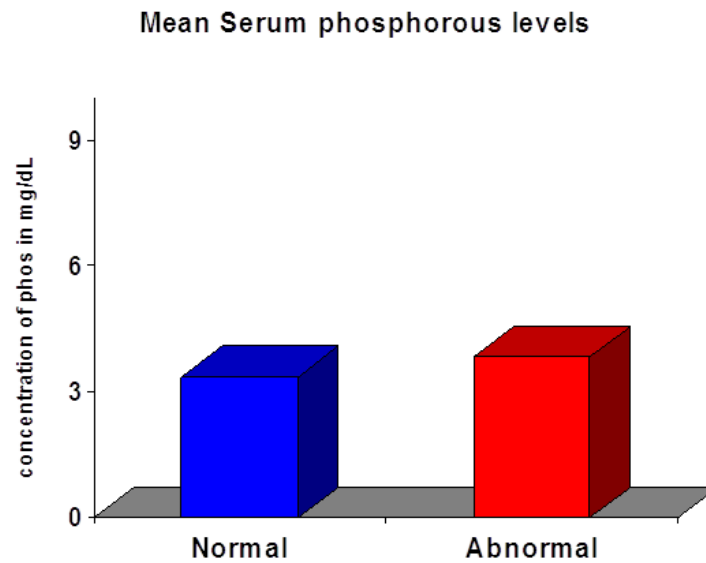


Fig. 4:

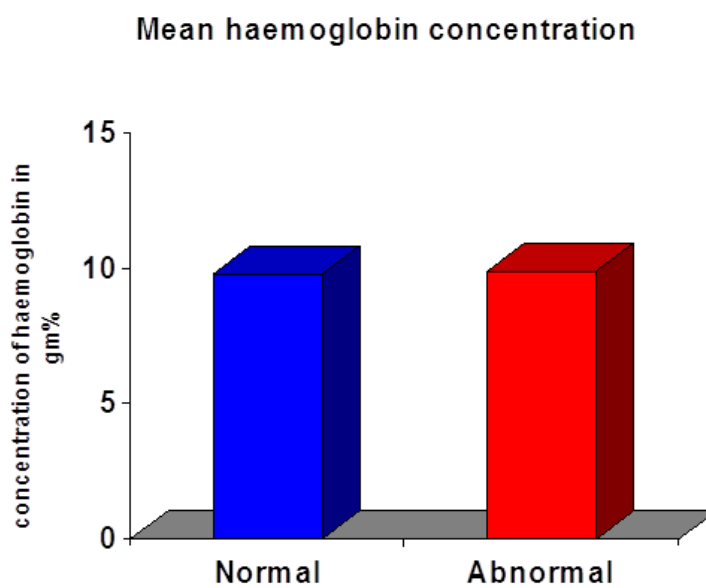


Fig. 5:

Table 1: Comparative study of cases with normal and abnormal glucose tolerance.

	Normal glucose tolerance (Mean+-S.D)	Abnormal glucose tolerance Mean+-S.D)	Significance
Fasting plasma glucose (mg/dL)	76.78 +/- 9.94	107.25 +/- 14.68	< 0.001
Post load plasma glucose (mg/dL)	102.22 +/- 24.43	147 +/- 4.76	< 0.001
Serum iron (μ g/dL)	111.35 +/- 53.08	264 +/- 33.8	< 0.001
Serum phosphorous (mg/dL)	3.367 +/- 0.58	3.82 +/- 0.63	Not significant
Haemoglobin (Gm%)	9.776 +/- 1.41	9.925 +/- 1.58	Not significant

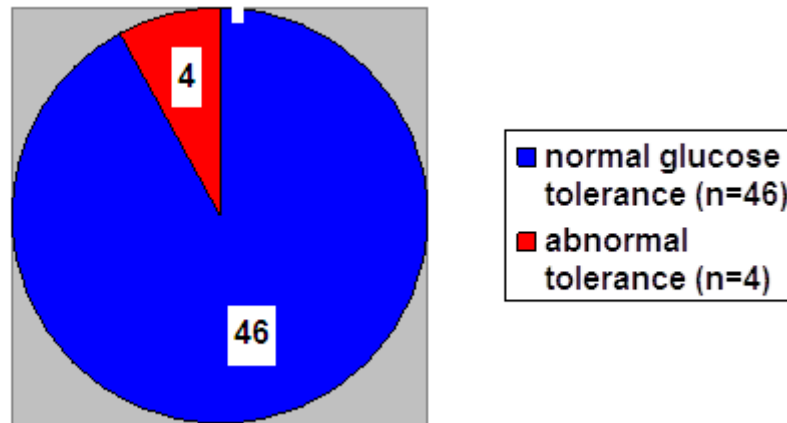


Fig. 6:

Distribution of Cases (Normal Vs abnormal glucose tolerance)

Gestational diabetes mellitus is defined as any degree of glucose intolerance with the onset of pregnancy or first recognised during pregnancy (Metzger GE, 1991). Women with gestational diabetes mellitus far exceed the number of pregnant women with pre-existing diabetes, the ratio being approximately 10 to 1. Clinical recognition of gestational diabetes is important because it can be associated with increased prenatal mortality and increase birth trauma, and maternal hypertension (Magee MS et al.1993).

The present study was done to know the incidence of glucose intolerance in pregnant women and to evaluate the relation with serum iron and serum phosphorous. In 50 pregnant women between 24-28 weeks of gestation oral glucose tolerance test (OGTT) with 75-g glucose without regard to recent meal status was done. In the same cases, serum iron and serum phosphorous were measured. The criteria for the diagnosis of gestational diabetes mellitus according to the recommendations of World Health Organization (de Veciana M, Major CA, Morgan et al. 1995).

Fasting blood sugar >99mg/dL,
Post glucose blood sugar >144 mg/dL were taken.

The prevalence of gestational diabetes mellitus was 8% which is comparable to the world wide prevalence (Joslin's Diabetes Mellitus, 2005). The frequency of gestational diabetes mellitus depends on the both the population studied and the diagnostic criteria used resulting in the range of prevalence between 1% and 14% (Joslin's Diabetes Mellitus, 2005). The prevalence of gestational diabetes tends to be higher in populations with high rate of type 2 diabetes. The prevalence in the general United States populations is about 4% (Eugelgan MM et al. 1988).

Screening of women between 24-28 weeks gestation with serum glucose levels obtained after 120 min. following 75 -g glucose load test administered at any

time of the day without regard to the time since the last meal has become a well validated and widely applied screening procedure. A value of 140 mg/dL or higher identifies 80% women with gestational diabetes mellitus, and a value of 130mg/dL or higher increases the sensitivity to 90% (Coustan DR et al . 1989).

In present study, cases with abnormal glucose tolerance (gestational diabetes mellitus) have-

Mean fasting plasma glucose	107.25 ± 14.68
Mean post plasma glucose	147 ± 4.76
Mean serum iron	264 ± 33.8
Mean serum phosphorous	3.82 ± 0.63
Mean haemoglobin	9.925 ± 1.58

In cases with normal glucose tolerance have-

Mean fasting plasma glucose	76.78 ± 9.94
Mean post plasma glucose	102.22 ± 24.43
Mean serum iron	111.35 ± 53.08
Mean serum phosphorous	3.367 ± 0.58
Mean haemoglobin	9.776 ± 1.41

Both fasting plasma glucose and post load plasma glucose levels are significantly higher in cases with abnormal glucose tolerance when compared with cases of normal glucose tolerance (p<0.001).

Serum iron concentration is significantly higher in cases with abnormal glucose tolerance when compared with cases of normal glucose tolerance. It is well established that people with haemochromatosis, a genetic condition that causes extremely high levels of iron in the body are at increased risk for developing diabetes. But a new study suggests even a moderately elevated iron levels may be associated with diabetes (Am J of Clin nutr, 2004). Recently, a prospective study in New Jersey, showed pregnant women who developed gestational diabetes mellitus had higher concentrations of serum ferritin than women who did not develop gestational diabetes mellitus (Diabetes Care, 2006). In another prospective study done in University of Hong Kong to determine whether non-anaemic women with gestational

diabetes mellitus have evidence of increased iron stores. The concentrations of serum ferritin, iron, transferrin saturation and postnatal haemoglobin were significantly higher in gestational diabetes mellitus patients, but there was no difference in the weight, BMI, third trimester haemoglobin and they concluded that there was an association between increased iron stores and glucose intolerance at the third trimester in non-anaemic women. The role of iron excess in the pathogenesis of gestational diabetes mellitus needs to be examined (Diabetic Medicine, 2001).

In our present study, the haemoglobin concentration was also estimated but no significance was noted in the concentration of haemoglobin when compared with normal and abnormal glucose tolerance cases. However, recently a case control study in Chinese women was done to examine the relationship between high haemoglobin concentration and occurrence of gestational diabetes mellitus. Women with BMI >26 kg/m² has shown that who developed WHO category of impaired glucose tolerance, with the 2-hr glucose values of the 75-g OGTT between 144 mg to 196 mg/dL (WHO, 1980) during pregnancy has significantly increased haemoglobin concentration compared with BMI matched controls (Lao TT, Ho LF, 2000). There is no significant change in Serum phosphorous and haemoglobin concentrations in both the groups.

CONCLUSION

In the modern era, the prevalence of Gestational Diabetes Mellitus is increasing due to various factors like nutrition, modified life-style, delayed conception, increasing incidence of diabetes mellitus and etc. Screening of gestational diabetes mellitus is essential to reduce the prenatal mortality and morbidity and maternal morbidity.

In the present study, the prevalence of Gestational Diabetes Mellitus is 8% in cases attending the antenatal clinic in G.S.L.General Hospital. Both fasting and post load plasma glucose levels are significantly high in cases of Gestational Diabetes Mellitus. Serum iron is significantly high in cases of Gestational Diabetes Mellitus. However, the studies to link excess serum iron to gestational diabetes mellitus are under trial. Our study showed elevated serum iron correlates with development of Gestational Diabetes Mellitus. Serum phosphorous and haemoglobin concentrations have not shown significant variation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Authors express their sincere gratitude for giving support to publish this paper to Prof. M. Jagannadha Rao, Vice Chancellor, Adikavi Nannaya University, Rajamahendravaram, East Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh, India.

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