

A pair-matched case-control study of socioeconomic and lifestyle factors associated with HPV infection among pregnant women in Beijing, China

Xianming Carroll *

PhD, Mercer University, USA

*Corresponding author: Xianming Carroll, PhD, Mercer University, USA, E-mail: xduprel@gmail.com

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Introduction

Statement of the Problem: Human papillomavirus (HPV) infection plays key role in the development of cervical cancer. The prevalence of HPV infection is increasing in China, but the socioeconomic and lifestyle factors associated with HPV infection in pregnant Chinese women have not been systematically analyzed. The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between socioeconomic/lifestyle factors and HPV infection among pregnant Chinese women in Beijing. The study hypotheses are: (1) when compared to pregnant women without HPV, pregnant women with HPV infection are more likely to be in the lower socioeconomic status (SES) as measured by education, occupation and household income; (2) when compared to pregnant women without HPV, pregnant women with HPV infection are more likely to choose unhealthy lifestyles as measured by tobacco smoking, alcohol consumption, and physical inactivity. Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: In this age matched case-control study, we examined the effect of socioeconomic and lifestyle factors on 66 pregnant women (HPV positive) and 132 pregnant women (HPV negative) in two hospitals in Beijing. Findings Our data suggest that alcohol consumption during pregnancy is the strongest significant factor associated with HPV infection in Chinese women. There were no statistical differences observed in any of the socioeconomic factors when comparing the HPV positive and negative groups. Conclusion & Significance: Public health strategies that focus on regulation of the sales and consumption of alcohol in China, and development of health education programs for pregnant women, would be positive steps to approach solutions to this problem.

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