

## Awareness and Barriers of Exercise Among Pregnant Women in Bisha, Saudi Arabia

Ayman M. El-Ashkar MD\* Lamis A Faleh\*\*, Mada A Alghamdi\*\*, Maha S Alaklobi\*\*, Manar B Almnabhi\*\*, Noura A Alshahrani\*\*, Norah A Albeishi\*\*, Rawan A Alqahtani\*\*, Reef T Alshahrani\*\*, Rizwana Memon PhD\*\*\* Ashraf S Metwally, MD\* Bahaeldin K. Elamin, PhD\*, Suaad Elnour, MD\*\*\*\*

### ABSTRACT

Physical activity during pregnancy is the best way to prevent various problems during delivery and even obesity after pregnancy. The study assessed the awareness and barriers to exercise among pregnant women in Bisha, Saudi Arabia, in 2024. The study was conducted within one month in February 2024 in Bisha city. There are eleven primary health care (PHC) centers containing antenatal care clinics, and five PHC centers were selected, which are (Al-Roshen, Plot 1, Plot 2, Janoub Al-Madina, and Almatar health care centers). In each PHC center, a list of pregnant women's phone numbers was collected. The number of participants was 295, and the self-administered questionnaire was distributed through text messages and phone calls. Overall, 44.4% of pregnant women had poor knowledge about exercise. 82.2% of pregnant women have a low level of exercise due to a lack of time, as the first and most important barrier. Women over the age of 30 have the highest awareness regarding exercise during pregnancy, and there was a statistically significant difference ( $\chi^2 = 0.039$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). This study revealed a poor level of awareness and practice of exercise among women during pregnancy. However, the age of thirty and above was associated with good awareness. The most important barriers were a lack of time and feeling tired.

**Keywords:** Awareness; Barriers; Bisha; Exercise; Pregnancy; Saudi Arabia.

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\* Department of Microorganisms and Clinical Parasitology  
College of Medicine, University of Bisha, Bisha, Saudi Arabia.  
Email: aymanpara@yahoo.com / galaxy202521@gmail.com

\*\* Medical Student at the College of Medicine  
University of Bisha, Bisha, Saudi Arabia.

\*\*\* Public Health Consultant at King Abdullah Hospital  
Bisha, Saudi Arabia.

\*\*\*\* Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology  
College of Medicine, University of Bisha, Bisha, Saudi Arabia.