

# Prevalence of Anemia, and Associated Risk Factors among Pregnant Women Attending Primary Healthcare Centers in the Kingdom of Bahrain

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Anemia is a global public health problem that particularly affects pregnant women and children. It results in significant adverse health outcomes for pregnant mothers and their offspring.

**Objectives:** To determine the prevalence of anemia, its types, and the associated risk factors, among pregnant women attending Primary Healthcare Centers in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

**Methods:** This is a cross-sectional study of pregnant women on their first visit (booking) to antenatal clinics at primary care centers, from the period of 1 January to 29 February 2020. A tested questionnaire was used to collect women data. Results of investigations including hemoglobin level and other tests were retrieved from electronic records.

**Results:** The prevalence of anemia among pregnant women, attending their first antenatal visit in Primary Healthcare Centers is 28.8%. Of those cases, 59.3% were categorized as mildly severe, while 40.7% were moderately severe.

The types of anemia identified were Iron Deficiency Anemia (IDA), vitamin B12 deficiencies and hemoglobinopathies in 39%, 30.8%, and 16% of cases, respectively.

**Conclusion:** The prevalence of anemia among pregnant women attending their first antenatal visit in primary healthcare centers in the Kingdom of Bahrain is at 28.8% which is lower than the average worldwide rate reported by the WHO for anemia in pregnancy. IDA is the most prevalent type of anemia in the pregnant women.

In this study, vitamin B12 deficiency significantly contributes to the prevalence of anemia among pregnant women. Further studies are required in order to explore the effects of pregnant women's dietary habits on anemia. Early booking is highly recommended in antenatal care to ensure early management of anemia.

**Keywords:** Anemia, Pregnancy, Antenatal, Primary Healthcare, Bahrain

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