SHOULD WE ROUTINELY SCREEN ASYMPTOMATIC PREGNANT WOMEN FOR CHLAMYDIA TRACHOMATIS? OUTCOME OF A PROSPECTIVE STUDY.

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Objective: The aim of the study was to determine the prevalence and age distribution of Chlamydia trachomatis in asymptomatic pregnant women and secondly to determine whether routine screening is advisable. Method: A prospective study of 1073 consecutive women who attended the antenatal clinic at Barnsley District general Hospital, Barnsley, UK, over a 15-month period. Pregnant women within gestational ages of 15-24 weeks were included in the study after informed consents were obtained from them. Pregnancies were confirmed by both menstrual date and ultrasound scan. Endo-cervical and high vaginal swabs were taken in the Chlamydia transport medium. Male urethral swabs were cultured by the ELISA (enzyme-linked immunofluorescent technique) and immunofluorescent technique. Results: Out of 1073 women studied, 65% were in the age group 21-30 years, while the smallest group was age 40 years and above. The overall prevalence of Chlamydia trachomatis was 4.6%, while the highest percentage of 3% (31) was in the age group 21-30 compared to the lowest percentage of 0.1% (2) in the 40-year-old and above age group. Conclusion: The prevalence rate of Chlamydia trachomatis among asymptomatic pregnant women which was 4.6% led us to conclude that routine screening and treatment of pregnant women should be recommended.