

**Effectiveness of an intervention program to improve compliance to malaria chemoprophylaxis during pregnancy in a malaria endemic area.**

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This study was carried out in an endemic area in Sri Lanka to describe the existing knowledge and attitudes among pregnant women and service providers, assess the current level of compliance to chloroquine prophylaxis in pregnancy and to plan, implement and evaluate interventions to improve compliance. The survey of pregnant women identified many deficiencies in knowledge, awareness of complications of malaria during pregnancy and methods of prevention were poor. Medical practitioners had poor knowledge of high risk groups in the population and about the increased risk of cerebral malaria associated with pregnancy. Similar deficiencies in knowledge were identified among field health staff. Knowledge on high risk groups, parasite vector and methods of prevention were poor. These deficiencies in knowledge were reflected in the population. Three interventions to improve compliance: health education leaflet, strip-packed chloroquine tablets and film-coated chloroquine tablets were identified using focus group discussions among several categories of stakeholders. These were implemented and evaluated in the present study. The success of the health education leaflet in this population may be related to the high level of literacy seen in the community. It appears that increasing the mother's knowledge on complications of malaria during pregnancy, to herself and to the foetus was sufficient to improve compliance. Based on these findings, it is recommended that this method be employed on a larger scale to improve compliance.