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Depression, Anxiety and Stress during Pregnancy

Abstract

Objective: The purpose of the present study is to quantitatively evaluate psychological factors (depression, anxiety and stress) on four different moments of pregnancy.

Study design: The presence of depressive, anxiety and stress symptoms and their severity were evaluated at 12, 20, 32 and 37 weeks of gestation, in 47 pregnant women aged between 20 and 39 years, using the Depression Anxiety and Stress Scales. Factor analysis was performed on the full 42 items of the scales. We used the Wilcoxon test to compare the different moments of evaluation.

Results: scores higher than the normal level were found for 19.1% (at 12 weeks), 12.8% (at 20 weeks), 21.3% (at 32 weeks) and 17% (at 37 weeks) of women in the case of depression, for 21.3% (at 12 weeks), 29.8% (at 20 weeks), 48.9% (at 32 and 37 weeks), of women in the case of anxiety, and 27.7% (at 12 weeks), 29.8% (at 20 weeks), 36.2% (at 32 and 37 weeks) of women in case of stress.

Conclusion: We found out that stress and anxiety increased during pregnancy while depressions decreased at 20 weeks of gestation and increased again during the 3rd trimester.