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Mother-to-child transmission of syphilis

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Background: Untreated syphilis in pregnancy can lead to serious complications for a fetus, including stillbirth and neonatal death, premature delivery, low birth weight, or congenital anomalies and active congenital syphilis in a neonate. The WHO estimated that 1.86 million cases of syphilis occur globally each year among pregnant women and a sizable proportion of cases go untreated. Worldwide, it is estimated that maternal syphilis is responsible for between 713600 and 15750 cases of congenital syphilis.

Objective: The aim of the study was to evaluate the epidemiological trends in incidence rates of mother-to-child transmission of syphilis, syphilis in women of reproductive age and pregnant women in the antenatal care program over two decades, to find a basis for preventive measures and to evaluate the epidemiological trends in European countries.

Material & Methods: Case series data of confirmed syphilis was used to evaluate the incidence rates over the period 1991-2014 in Slovakia.

Results: During the monitored period, 101 cases of mother-to-child transmitted syphilis were detected. The rate increased in 1996, corresponding to 33.3 per 100,000 live births and discovered discordance in antenatal care program. The rates of syphilis in women of reproductive age showed increased rate in 2001, corresponding to 10.44 per 100000 populations. Pregnant women reported the highest rate in 2000, corresponding to 3.24 per 1000 pregnant women population. Syphilis notification rates in all three groups showed increased trend in the first decade following with decreased trend in the second decade. The high increase in rate notification among pregnant women in 2011 (0.37) decreasing up to 0.11 in 2014 was followed with decreasing of mother-to-child transmission.

Conclusion: Mother-to-child transmission of syphilis poses public health problem and requires comprehensive surveillance in all countries. In general, the active maternal syphilis in developed countries is rare. However, mother-to-child transmission of syphilis is not portable in all European countries resulting in an underestimated incidence of mother-to-child transmission of syphilis. Data of the study registered that the last years 2011-2014 showed improvement in antenatal care program corresponding with decrease rate of mother-to-child transmission of syphilis; however, the rate of syphilis is increasing in population. The basis to improve the epidemiologic situation in mother-to-child transmission of syphilis results in the requirement of effective improvement of antenatal care program in pregnant women.

Biography

Danka Svecova is presently a Professor of Dermatovenerology, Head of Bullous Disorders Unit, Department of Dermatovenerology, University Hospital and Faculty of Medicine, Comenius University, Slovakia. She is a Board Member of Committee for Dermatovenerology and Immunology dissertation for PhD at Comenius University and a Member of Committee for Probation of Specialization for Dermatovenerology at Comenius University and University of JP Safarik in Kosice. She has participated in research on Skin Allergology and Immunology under the supervision of Professor Akira Ohkawara at Hokkaido University in Sapporo, Japan. She wrote two monographs about blistering disorders-Pemphigus vulgaris autoimmune disease and Pemphigus.

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