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Pregnancy nutritional status in Ethiopia: A case study of pregnant women in Shashemene District, Southern Oromia Region Ethiopia

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Inadequate quality and quantity diet are one of the major reasons for high levels of malnutrition in pregnant women. Cross-sectional survey was conducted in Shashemene District, Southern Oromia Region. A two-stage cluster sampling technique was used to select a representative sample of 15190 pregnant women aged 20-50 years from four rural villages Energy and nutrient intakes from foods were calculated from one-day weighed food records on a sub-sample (n=83). The result of the study showed that the intakes of most nutrients were lower than the recommended intake. The energy intake of the study participants both in 2nd and 3rd trimesters of pregnancy were 2,308kcal and 1,420.5kcal compared to the recommended 2,340kcal and 2,452kcal, respectively. Except for iron, almost all micronutrient intakes were lower than the recommended intake. Vitamin A intake was 3 μ g compared with the recommended 800 μ g, while protein intake of the study respondents in 2nd and 3rd trimester of pregnancy was 45.9g and 31.5g, respectively, compared with the recommended 71g. Risk factors for undernutrition were multiple pregnancies and no consumption of cereal-based foods. This study revealed that the energy and nutrient intake of the pregnant women in the study area was below the recommended intakes. Furthermore, the situation might be aggravated by high phytate content food consumption reported. Nutritional status of pregnant women in the study area was not adequate to support the increased energy and nutrient requirement of the participants.

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