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Risk factors associated with childhood asthma: A case control study

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Background: Asthma is one of the most common chronic childhood illnesses with rapidly increasing prevalence in low income countries. For planning effective intervention to reverse this condition we need a better understanding of the risk factors for asthma in early life.

Objective: This study aimed to identify the risk factors associated with childhood asthma and its morbidity patterns.

Methods: The case control study was conducted in the pediatric department of Dhulikhel hospital, Kathmandu University Hospital, Dhulikhel from March 2016 to March 2017. The control group was composed of 175 age matched children attending the outpatient clinic with non-pulmonary health problem. Data was collected through Performa and analyzed using SPSS version 23. The association of asthma with genetic and environmental risk factors was evaluated by univariant (chi-square or Fisher's exact test) and binomial logistic regression.

Results: Childhood asthma was more common in male children between 1-5 years. Majority of children 77 (44%) were graded as mild persistent asthma. In multivariate analysis the following factors were associated with asthma: Family history of asthma (OR 0.06; 95% CI 0.005-0.94, $p=0.04$), exclusive breast feeding (OR 18.42; 95% CI 2.56-132.3, $p=0.004$), allergic disorder in children (OR 0.003; 95% CI 0.000-0.037, $p=0.0001$).

Conclusion: Family history of asthma, allergic history in the patient and nonexclusive breast feeding were significantly associated with asthma. Proper treatment and follow up with good drug compliance and avoidance of risk factor can significantly reduce the morbidity pattern of asthma in children.

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