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Prevalence and predictors of low birth weight in Guilan, Iran

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Background: Birth weight is an important biological determinant of newborn survival in adverse conditions. That shows fetal exposition to risk factors such as maternal unfavorable demographic conditions and diseases. This study aimed to determine prevalence and predictors of low birth weight.

Methods: This was a cross-sectional study on 560 pregnant women attending health care centers of Rasht, Iran from March 2010 to March 2011. Data collections were based on their health record information in health centers. Finally, relationship between infant birth weight with maternal demographic characteristics and pregnancy outcomes were analyzed statistically by software spss and t-test, ANOVA, and correlation tests.

Results: The mean infant birth weight obtained 3266.14 grams that the prevalence of low birth weight was 4.1%. According to the analysis, the factors associated with low birth weight were: mother pre-pregnancy Body mass index, hypertension, pre-eclampsia, preterm rupture of membrane, preterm labor and neonatal sex. The significant risk factors for infant birth weight were: birth interval, mother's weight gain during pregnancy, gestational age, preterm labor and hypertension.

Conclusions: Maternal biosocial, medical and obstetric factors have strong association with low birth weight. To overcome this problem, special attention is required to strengthen the mother and child health care services in the community.

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