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Original Article

An Epidemiological Study on Infant Mortality and Factors Affecting it in Rural Areas of Birjand, Iran

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Abstract:

Objective: Infant mortality rate is one of the most expressive indicators of development in all countries. The aim of this study was to determine the cause of infant mortality and risk factors in rural areas of Birjand in Iran.

Methods: This population based case-control study covered 156 infants who died when aged less than one-year in health houses of Birjand between January 2004 and December 2005. For each case, two controls were selected matching one-to-one to the case considering variables of residency and their date of birth. The data was collected through interview with mothers and reviewing infants' files in health houses.

Findings: 57.7 percent of deaths in under one year old infants happened during the first month of their lives. The most important causes of death in neonates were prematurity and low birth weight (44.4%) later gastroenteritis (30.3%). In addition, the study showed that 9.6 percent of infants had died because of narcotic toxicosis. Moreover, the study showed a significant relationship between infant mortality and parents' level of education, mother's addiction, age of mother in the first pregnancy, prematurity, low birth weight, type of delivery and exclusive breast feeding.

Conclusion: Special attention to infantile period and special care for infants born to at-risk mothers, as well as providing special health education can cause a dramatic reduction in infants' mortality rate.

Keywords:

Infant . Mortality rate . Health house . Prematurity . Low birth weight

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