

Knowledge and practices of iodized salt consumption among pregnant women in Galle district  
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#### Abstract

**Introduction:** Sri Lanka introduced national salt iodization programme in 1995 to control iodine deficiency disorders (IDD) as iodized salt is the main source of iodine in the population. Although Sri Lanka achieved a satisfactory control of IDD in 2005, a recent study showed that iodine nutrition in pregnant women in Sri Lanka is far below the WHO recommendation. Lack of knowledge on iodized salt and improper practices of its usage may cause iodine deficiency during pregnancy.

**Methods:** Study was conducted in Bope-Poddala health division of Galle District in the Southern province. Pregnant women (n=425) with gestational age  $\leq 12$  weeks were studied. An interviewer administered questionnaire was used to collect data.

**Results:** Forty percent of pregnant women in the sample had poor knowledge on iodized salt and the importance of iodine in the diet. Less than 50% of subjects were aware of bad consequences of maternal iodine deficiency on their babies and about 50% of them had improper practices on iodized salt usage. A poor correlation between the good knowledge and proper practices, were observed.

**Conclusion:** Overall knowledge about iodine and iodized salt is not satisfactory and the health educational programmes expressing the importance of eliminating IDD at various levels is important to prevent iodine deficiency during pregnancy.

#### Keywords:

Iodized salt consumption; Knowledge; Practices; Preventive medicine; Pregnancy; Iodine deficiency disorders