

Thesis Title Health Education Program Applying Health Belief Model
 with Social Support for Prevention of Iron Deficiency
 Anemia among Pregnant Women Attending Natal Care Service
 at Phromphiram Hospital in Phitsanulok Province

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ABSTRACT

Anemia is still one of the major health problems in Thailand. It can happen in all age groups. The main cause of anemia is iron deficiency, especially in the pregnant women who need much iron for building red blood cells and growing of the babies. If a pregnant woman gets less iron, it affects her delivery, and the brain development and learning ability of the child. Iron deficiency anemia is mainly caused by the unhealthy behaviors of mothers in eating food and taking iron tablets. The main purpose of this quasi-experimental study was to investigate changes in preventive iron deficiency behaviors among pregnant women attending natal care service at Phromphiram hospital in Phitsanulok province. Health Belief Model and Social Support were applied for conducting the health education program.

The sample, selected based on some criteria, consisted of 80 pregnant women. Forty of them were assigned into the experimental group while the rest were in the comparison group. Only the experimental group participated in the health education program. Data were collected through interview with questionnaires before and after the experiment.

Results of the study, after conducting the experiment, showed that the experimental group gained significantly more knowledge, perception and preventive iron deficiency behaviors than prior to the experiment and more than the comparison group. Also, it was found that, in the experimental group, the proportion of pregnant women who had normal level of hematocrit was significantly greater than before conducting the experiment and more than the comparison group.

Since the results of this study suggest that a health education program applying Health Belief Model and Social Support can enable pregnant women to improve knowledge perception and behaviors. therefore, this health education program should be applied to those pregnant women in the community for iron deficiency prevention.