

ABSTRACT

Background: Practices during pregnancy involve demand for antenatal care services and planning for a health child birth, including emergency preparedness, prevention of malaria, HIV testing and nutrition. However, use of herbal medicines still stands neglecting formal standard medical care therefore this research aims at establishing determinants of use of herbal medicines among pregnant mothers attending antenatal care at MRRH.

Methods: Hospital based cross sectional study design was used to carry out the study on factors influencing use of herbal medicines among pregnant mothers attending antenatal clinic at MRRH.

Results: Sample of 212 respondents were interviewed and out of those 74.1% of participants were found to use herbal medicines. According to this study findings, use of herbal medicines was determined by preparation of herbal medicines (OR=0.054, 95% CI (0.019-0.155), reason for using herbal medicine while at ANC [OR=0.197, 95% CI (0.076-0.514), P-0.001), source of information about herbal medicines (OR=0.216, 95% CI (0.080-0.581) P-0.002) and paying for herbs (OR=0.373, 95% CI (0.197-0.704) P-0.002).

Conclusion: The use of herbal medicine during pregnancy is a common practice and associated with rural residency illiteracy and low average education status, pregnant women mainly use and rely on friends, family members and support groups as their source of information about herbal medicines. Commonly used herbs were Aloe vera (Aloaceae), (Leguminosae) Omusisa, (Asteraceae) Omugino and (Sapindaceae) Omwataibale and the common indication that were given were cough, fever, pain, weakness, and skin rash among others. Given the high frequency of use of herbal medicine and a low rate of confession to the health workers at antenatal, hospitals and health centers need to train their health workers and also set up a program of open discussion with mothers about the effects of herbal medicines leading to a health outcome.

Recommendation: More detailed surveys covering the factors associated with the use of herbal medicines in pregnancy remain to be undertaken to complete the documentation in Uganda so that the use of herbal drugs during pregnancy is assessed carefully.