

Background: A third of neonatal deaths are associated with infections and this proportion rises in areas where at least half of births occur at home like Uganda. In particular cord sepsis contributes significantly to high neonatal mortality. Lack of knowledge coupled with strong cultural beliefs influence newborn cord care practices. These infections are preventable and can be reduced by practicing clean delivery, clean cord care. The aim of this study was assessing knowledge, attitudes and practices of mothers delivered at FRRH on WHO's recommendations for newborn cord care.

Methodology: A cross-sectional descriptive study was done, using interview guided questionnaires covering the sociodemographic, knowledge, attitudes and practice domains. A total of 216 postnatal mothers were interviewed. Data was analyzed using SPSS version 20.

Results: overall knowledge about cord care was good with 98.1% of the respondents saying that they knew about cord care. The knowledge on postnatal cord care was dependent on who advised about cord care. The nurses were main sources of information on cord care with 61.9%. There was a knowledge gap on whether the cord should be left covered or uncovered with only 10.2% saying the cord should be uncovered. A positive attitude was noted consistently on cord care. Although 73.1% did not apply traditional substances, 26.9% were reported to have applied traditional substances which were harmful to the cord. A chi square test showed a significant relationship between the level of education the application of substances to the cord ($P=0.046$).

Conclusion: Maternal knowledge regarding newborn umbilical cord care was generally good. However knowledge gaps existed in the aspect of whether to leave the cord covered or not covered. Post natal mothers had a positive attitude towards cord care. Observing cultural practices of applying local substances to the cord present a high risk for cord infections. This meant cord care practices are still wanting.