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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Socio-demographic and preconception risk factors in parents of children suffering from congenital cardiopathy[☆]

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KEYWORDS

Congenital heart defects;
Risk factors;
Life style

Abstract

Objective: To identify the preconception risk factors in parents of children suffering from congenital cardiopathy.

Method: A cross-sectional descriptive study, which included parents of children suffering from cardiopathy, attended at consultations in a not-for-profit organisation, in order to be diagnosed and referred for heart surgery or to be assessed in postoperative cardiac monitoring. The sample population included 500 people who responded to a survey for the identification of socio-demographic and preconception risk factors.

Results: Couples were found with up to 3 cardiac children. Parents with 2 or more children suffering from cardiopathy were classified in the majority as belonging to the middle socio-economic level and not owning their own house. An association with the number of children with cardiopathy, the educational level of their parents ($P = .013$), their home area ($P = .041$) and type of accommodation ($P = .045$) was found. Regarding the preconception risk factors, there was evidence of statistically significant associations among the number of children with cardiopathy and their exposure to fertilisers ($P = .024$), their exposure to fuels ($P = .025$), the use of antihypertensive medication ($P = .37$), and alcohol consumption ($P = .042$) and cocaine use ($P = .039$) by their parents.

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Conclusions: The population of parents with a greater number of children suffering from cardiopathy were characterised as having socioeconomic and educational constraints. The pre-conception risk factors which show an association with the number of children suffering from cardiopathy were characterised as physical and/or chemical environmental risk factors and the consumption of certain psychoactive substances and medication by their parents. It is necessary to analyse each risk factor separately, taking into account the different types of cardiopathy.
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PALABRAS CLAVE

Cardiopatías congénitas;
Factores de riesgo;
Estilo de vida

Factores sociodemográficos y factores de riesgo preconceptionales en padres y madres de niños con cardiopatías congénitas

Resumen

Objetivo: Caracterizar los factores de riesgo preconceptionales en padres y madres de niños con cardiopatías congénitas.

Método: Estudio descriptivo de corte transversal que incluyó a padres y madres de niños con cardiopatías atendidos en consulta en una *organización sin ánimo de lucro*, para ser diagnosticados y direccionados a cirugía cardíaca o para ser valorados en control postoperatorio de cardiología. La muestra estuvo constituida por 500 personas, a quienes se aplicó un cuestionario para la identificación de los factores sociodemográficos y los factores de riesgo preconceptionales.

Resultados: Se encontraron parejas hasta con 3 niños cardiopatas. Los padres que tenían 2 o más hijos con cardiopatías se caracterizaban por pertenecer mayormente al estrato socioeconómico medio y no poseer vivienda propia. Se encontró asociación entre el número de hijos con cardiopatías y el nivel educativo de los progenitores ($p=0,013$), la zona de residencia ($p=0,041$) y el tipo de vivienda ($p=0,045$). En cuanto a los factores de riesgo preconceptionales, se evidenciaron asociaciones estadísticamente significativas entre el número de hijos con cardiopatías y la exposición a fertilizantes ($p=0,024$), la exposición a combustibles ($p=0,025$), el consumo de medicamentos antihipertensivos ($p=0,037$), el consumo de alcohol ($p=0,042$) y el consumo de cocaína ($p=0,039$).

Conclusiones: La población de padres que poseían un mayor número de hijos con cardiopatías se caracterizaba por presentar limitaciones socioeconómicas y educativas. Los factores preconceptionales que muestran asociación con el número de hijos con cardiopatías se caracterizaban por ser factores de riesgo ambientales de tipo físico y químico, además del consumo de algunas sustancias psicoactivas y medicamentos. Es necesario estudiar cada factor de riesgo teniendo en cuenta los diferentes tipos de cardiopatías por separado.

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What is known?

Congenital cardiopathies are anatomical heart and major vessel defects. They originate in the first phases of foetal development, and usually manifest after birth. The causes of this type of alterations are now thought to be multifactor, and cases often correspond to lifestyle factors and exposure to all types of substance that raise the probability of their occurring.

In healthcare practice, congenital cardiopathies are seen as a problem which affects not only children, but also their carers and family in general. This is due to

the delay in diagnosis and the complexity of their treatment. Likewise, parents' lack of awareness of the risk factors they are exposed to is of interest to nurses, showing the great importance of preconception advice.

What this paper contributes?

Awareness of preconception risk factors enables a significant preventive approach, encouraging strategies that improve birth control in families with a history of risk factors, promoting protective factors during prenatal monitoring and improving the education of the population of fertile age.

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