



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Prevalence and factors associated with breast milk donation in banks that receive human milk in primary health care units ☆,☆☆

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KEYWORDS

Human milk;
Milk banks;
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Primary health care;
Donation;
Epidemiology

Abstract

Objective: To estimate the prevalence and to analyze factors associated with breast milk donation at primary health care units in order to increase the human milk bank reserves.

Methods: Cross-sectional study carried out in 2013 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. A representative sample of 695 mothers of children younger than 1 year attended to at the nine primary health care units with human milk donation services were interviewed. A hierarchical approach was used to obtain adjusted prevalence ratios (APR) by Poisson regression with robust variance. The final model included the variables associated with breast milk donation ($p \leq 0.05$).

Results: 7.3% of the mothers had donated breast milk. Having been encouraged to donate breast milk by healthcare professionals, relatives, or friends (APR = 7.06), receiving information on breast milk expression by the primary health care unit (APR = 3.65), and receiving help from the unit professionals to breastfeed (APR = 2.24) were associated with a higher prevalence of donation. Admission of the newborn to the neonatal unit was associated with a lower prevalence of donation (APR = 0.09).

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PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Leite humano;
Bancos de leite;
Estudos transversais;
Atenção primária à
saúde;
Doação;
Epidemiologia

Conclusions: Encouragement to breast milk donation, and information and help provided by primary health care unit professionals to breastfeeding were shown to be important for the practice of human milk donation.

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Prevalência e fatores associados à doação de leite para postos de recebimento de leite humano de unidades básicas de saúde

Resumo

Objetivo: Estimar a prevalência e analisar os fatores associados à doação de leite materno em unidades básicas de saúde com vistas a aumentar os estoques dos bancos de leite humano.

Métodos: Estudo transversal conduzido em 2013 na cidade do Rio de Janeiro, Brasil, mediante entrevista a uma amostra representativa de 695 mães de crianças menores de 1 ano assistidas nas 9 unidades básicas de saúde com posto de recebimento de leite humano ordenhado. Razões de prevalência ajustadas (RPa) foram obtidas por modelo de regressão de Poisson com variância robusta, segundo modelo hierarquizado. O modelo final foi composto pelas variáveis que se associaram à doação de leite materno por profissionais de saúde ($p \leq 0,05$).

Resultados: Doaram leite materno 7,3% das mães. Ter sido incentivada a doar leite materno por profissionais de saúde, parentes ou amigos (RPa = 7,06), ter recebido orientação da unidade básica sobre ordenha das mamas (RPa = 3,65) e ter recebido ajuda da unidade básica para amamentar (RPa = 2,24) se associaram a uma maior prevalência de doação, enquanto a internação prévia do bebê em unidade neonatal se associou a uma menor prevalência (RPa = 0,09).

Conclusões: Ficou evidente a importância do incentivo à doação, das orientações e da ajuda da unidade básica para amamentar para a prática de doação de leite materno.

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Introduction

Breast milk is the best food for the infant; it has species-specific nutrients and a significant number of protective factors, such as IgA, IgM, IgG, macrophages, neutrophils, B and T lymphocytes, lactoferrin, lysozyme, and bifid factor.¹ Breastfeeding contributes to the reduction in infant mortality, preventing infections such as respiratory and diarrheal diseases,^{2,3} and reducing the hospitalization rates for these infections.^{4,5} Breast milk composition is adapted to the newborn's gestational age.⁶ Feeding premature infants with human milk increases brain growth and intelligence quotients, affecting cognitive development,^{7,8} and reduces the incidence of necrotizing enterocolitis.⁹ As human milk feeding is even more important for at-risk neonates, the Brazilian Ministry of Health highlights its importance for the survival of these infants.¹⁰

A human milk bank (HMB) is a specialized unit linked to a neonatal intensive care unit, and one of its missions is to stimulate the donation of breast milk to feed at-risk hospitalized newborns. They are responsible for the pasteurization and distribution of human milk, taking into account the baby's needs. However, the human milk collected by the HMB still does not meet the demand of at-risk newborns in most Brazilian states, which recently prompted the Brazilian Ministry of Health to launch a campaign to encourage the donation of breast milk, to meet the goal of a 15% increase in the volume of human milk collected in the country.¹¹

In 2007, aiming to increase breast milk reserves, an innovative experience emerged in the city of Rio de Janeiro. Healthcare professionals from a primary health care unit (PHCU), observing mothers with excess breast milk production disposing it, created a strategy called "Breast milk expressed Receiving Services", together with a maternity hospital that had a HMB. Breastfeeding mothers were encouraged to express the breast milk at home, which was then collected by the PHCU and sent to a nearby HMB. In 2010, this experience was incorporated by the Municipal Health Secretariat of Rio de Janeiro, which opened nine milk receiving services, which work together with reference HMBs.¹²

The present study aimed to estimate the prevalence and to analyze the factors associated with breast milk donation to PHCUs in the city of Rio de Janeiro. The authors believe this study may contribute to the identification of factors associated with breast milk donation, so that actions that will generate an increase in the prevalence of such donation can be implemented.

Methods

This was a cross-sectional study carried out in November and December of 2013 in PHCUs of the municipality. In September and October of the same year, a pilot study was conducted in two PHCUs of the city to test the tools and define the field logistics. These two units were

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