

Abstract

Menstrual Management in Girls with Intellectual Disabilities: A Questionnaire Based Study

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Objective:

To describe the menstrual pattern and menstrual care of girls with intellectual disabilities and to evaluate the the impact of menstruation and awareness of parents/ guardians of girls with intellectual disability.

Methods:

Families of girls aged 9-17 years with known disability, attending public forum and adolescent gynaecology clinic were recruited in a questionnaire based study.

Results:

123 parents/guardians completed the questionnaire with average age of girls was 12.28 years with mean menarcheal age was 11.12years. From this study, those parents/guardians with lower family income (OR = 0.00; 95% CI = 0.00-0.20), unable to manage menses (OR = 0.03; 95% CI = 0.00-0.61) and moderate severity of menses (OR= 0.01; 95% CI = 0.00-1.21) were associated with seeking medical help on menstrual suppression. Only 43.1% parents/guardians aware that there are options available for menstrual suppression which was quite low. The factors associate for parents requesting for sterilization were lower family income (OR = 0.02; 95% CI = 0.00-0.36) and concern about sexual abuse (OR = 0.25; 95% CI = 0.06-0.39).

Conclusion:

Menstrual pattern in girls with intellectual disabilities are similar to those without disabilities. Both girls and parents or guardians were not greatly affected by the menstruation. Parent's or guardian's knowledge and awareness on menstrual management or suppression are still lacking. There is a need to actively educate parents and guardians on this issue.