COVID-19 vaccine acceptance among pregnant, lactating, and non-pregnant women of reproductive age in Turkey: a cross-sectional analytical study

Zeynep Daşıkan[1], Ebru Ekrem[2], and Didem Kıratlı[3]

[1]Ege Üniversitesi
[2]Bartin Universitesi
[3]Dr Behçet Uz Çocuk Hastalıkları Eğitim ve Araştırma Hastanesi

November 6, 2023

Abstract

Background: Vaccination is a proven method of managing the COVID-19 pandemic and it is essential to prevent negative consequences in pregnant, lactating, and reproductive-age populations. The study aims to identify the rates of COVID-19 vaccine acceptance, the reasons for receiving and not receiving the vaccine, and the associated factors among pregnant, lactating, and non-pregnant women of reproductive age. Methods: This cross-sectional and analytical study was conducted online in Turkey, at the end of the fourth wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, between February-May 2022. A total of 658 participated in the study. The Question Form and the Fear of COVID-19 Scale were used to collect data. Results: Vaccine acceptance rates were 91.7% in non-pregnant women of reproductive age, 77% in lactating women, and 59% in pregnant women (p<0.05). The highest rate of vaccine hesitancy was observed in pregnant women (31.3%), and the vaccine rejection rate was the highest in lactating women (10.2%). For pregnant women (55.5%) and non-pregnant women of reproductive age (56.4%), the primary reason for the acceptance of the vaccine had no other choice but to be protected against the disease, while for lactating women (50.6%), the primary reason for receiving the vaccine was protecting the baby. Conclusion: Lack of knowledge about and confidence in the COVID-19 vaccine is still one of the barriers to vaccine acceptance today. Health care providers (HCPs) should provide effective counseling to pregnant, lactating, and non-pregnant reproductive-aged women based on current information and guidelines.