

Testing for Sexually Transmitted Infections in Pregnancy

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Background

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) are an ongoing issue for the Public Health system. In particular, antenatal women are at risk of pregnancy complications if an infection is left untreated. Untreated STIs in pregnancy can lead to complications including chorioamnionitis, pre-term rupture of membranes, premature delivery, low birth weight, stillbirth, and postpartum endometritis^{1,2}. RANZCOG suggests that STI testing is recommended on a risk stratification basis.

Aim

Evaluate STI testing in antenatal clinics at first booking visit, to determine the frequency of testing, prevalence of infections and adherence to guideline recommendations.

Results

The study included 746 number of pregnant women presenting for their booking appointment. 100% of women were screened for HIV, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and Syphilis. STI testing data was available for 100% of these women. Of these 16.8% were screened for Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea, and 0.7% Trichomonas.

Of the 48.5% (282) of women with at least one identifiable risk factor, 22.1% (48) completed STI testing while of the 2% (15) of women with three risk factors, 60% (9) completed STI screening.

Of the 126 urine STI tests recorded, 2% (3) and 1.5% (2) were positive for chlamydia and gonorrhoea, respectively. 100% of women treated completed a test of cure.

Discussion

STI screening in antenatal women is limited and not concordant with current guideline recommendations.

Risk Factors

- Women aged less than 30,
- people who use drugs,
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander,
- past history of an STI,
- contact of someone with an STI,
- limited or no antenatal care,
- homeless people, and
- recent change of partner^{3,4}.

Methods

This retrospective audit collected clinical data from all pregnant patients presenting to the Royal Brisbane and Womens' Hospital (RBWH) antenatal clinic for a booking appointment between January 1 - April 1, 2022. Data was collected on patient demographics, risk factors for STIs and results of STI testing (urine chlamydia/gonorrhoea /trichomonas PCR).

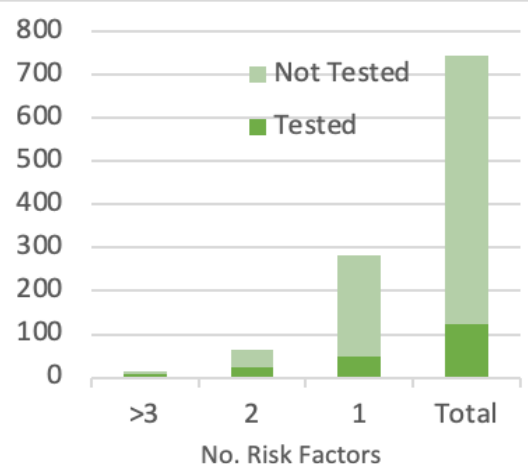


Figure 1: Number of antenatal women tested for STI screening based on identified risk factors.