

**Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices of Pregnant
Mothers Towards Prevention of Malaria in Pregnancy at Dokolo Health Centre Iv,
Dokolo District
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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Malaria in pregnancy remains a significant health challenge, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, where it contributes to maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality. Despite preventive measures recommended by the World Health Organization and adopted by the Ministry of Health-Uganda, the prevalence of malaria in pregnancy remains high (65%) in Dokolo District, Northern Uganda. This study was aimed at assessing the Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices of pregnant mothers attending antenatal care services at Dokolo Health Centre IV towards the prevention of malaria during pregnancy.

Methods: A cross-sectional study design was used, and data was collected using a structured questionnaire from 337 pregnant mothers who were selected using a simple random sampling technique. The study was conducted in adherence to ethical considerations, from October 2023 to August 2024. Data generated was analysed using STATA version 17 and results were presented in descriptive statistics and tables.

Results:

The majority of participants (99.4%) had heard of malaria, and 91.7% identified it as transmitted by infected female Anopheles mosquitoes. Awareness of malaria prevention methods was high, with 65% knowing about IPT-SP and 78.9% aware of ITNs. However, only 56% knew IPT-SP should begin by the 13th week of pregnancy. Although most mothers (93.8%) recognized malaria as a serious threat and 90.5% were confident in prevention methods, 14.3% with pregnancies beyond 13 weeks had not taken IPT-SP. Early ANC attendance (before 13 weeks) was associated with better malaria prevention practices, and recurrent malaria infections increased the likelihood of adopting preventive measures. Younger mothers and those with primary education were more likely to adopt malaria prevention practices, though these associations were not statistically significant.

Conclusion:

Pregnant mothers attending ANC at Dokolo Health Centre IV have good awareness and positive attitudes toward malaria prevention, but gaps remain in knowledge, early ANC attendance, and IPT-SP adherence. Misconceptions, such as fears of IPT-SP causing congenital abnormalities, point to the need for targeted education. Efforts should focus on promoting early ANC initiation and adherence to IPT-SP by the 13th week of pregnancy.

Keywords: *Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices, Pregnant Mothers, Prevention, Malaria Pregnancy, Dokolo Health Centre Iv, Dokolo District.*