Fluid Consumption by Mexican Women during Pregnancy and First Semester of Lactation

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Introduction

Previous information about fluid consumption in the Mexican population, collected by the national nutrition survey of 2006, shows that adults drink, on average, 1,721 mL/day, of which 889 mL correspond to water. However, there is no information about fluid consumption by women during pregnancy or lactation. To address this gap, the objective of the present study was to describe the amount and type of fluids consumed by a sample of adult, pregnant or lactating Mexican women living in the urban area of Mexico City.

Key Findings

We carried out a cross-sectional, observational study, inviting 154 pregnant (evenly distributed by trimester of pregnancy) and 155 lactating (first six months of exclusive or partial breast feeding) women between 18-45 years old, to complete a self-report on fluid intake over a seven consecutive-day period. Our study found that, on average, pregnant women drank 2.62 L/day and lactating women drank 2.75 L/day. Forty-one percent of pregnant women drank less than the recommended 2.3 L fluids/day, and 54% of lactating women drank less than the recommended 2.7 L/day. Plain water contributed to 33% of total fluid intake, and sugar-sweetened beverages (SSB) contributed to 38% of total fluid intake. Up to 50% of pregnant and lactating women drank more than 1 L/day of SSB, which contributed, respectively, to 632 kcal/day (27.5% of estimated recommended dietary intake) and 700 kcal/day (28% of recommended dietary intake).

Relevance for Healthy Hydration

Our study shows that a sizeable proportion of women included in the sample reported consuming less than the recommended amount of fluids, according to their physiological stage. It also highlighted that SSB were consumed in larger amounts than plain water. The high rates of overweight and obesity found in Mexican women, particularly at the age represented by this sample, should alert us to the consumption of SSB during pregnancy and lactation, as excessive intake of these beverages may increase the risks of obesity, diabetes mellitus, and other chronic diseases. Different health practitioners, including obstetricians, nurses, midwives, and general practitioners, may find these data useful to promote recommendations for a healthier lifestyle.

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