

Contraception knowledge and practice among fistula patients at referral centers in Kenya

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Abstract

Objective: To establish knowledge and practice of contraception among patients presenting with a fistula attending fistula care services at 4 centers in Kenya.

Methods: In a descriptive cohort study carried out between January and December 2011, patients presenting with a history of urine and/or stool leakage were screened and those with confirmed diagnosis of fistula were assessed and prepared for surgery. Informed consent was obtained from study participants before surgical intervention. After surgery, a standard questionnaire was used to collect information on sociodemographics, duration of leakage, and reproductive health practices.

Results: A total of 206 patients were interviewed. Most of the patients were young (mean age 22 years). Literacy was low: only 1.7% reported tertiary-level education, and 56.7% reported primary-level education. With regard to family planning, 76.2% of patients expressed a willingness to use contraception after fistula repair.

Conclusion: Among patients presenting with a fistula in Kenya, the unmet need for family planning was high. There is an urgent need for healthcare providers to integrate family planning services in fistula care programs.

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