

EPIDEMIOLOGICAL AND ETIOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ASYMPTOMATIC BACTERIURIA IN PREGNANT WOMEN IN THE KHOREZM REGION

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Introduction. Asymptomatic bacteriuria (ASB) is a clinically important condition in pregnancy because it may be associated with urinary tract infection and adverse obstetric outcomes. As symptoms may be absent, microbiological screening is important for identifying bacteriuria that would otherwise remain undetected. Regional epidemiological information can help characterize the scale of the problem and support evidence-informed antenatal care.

Objective. To assess the reported epidemiological pattern of bacteriuria among pregnant women in the Khorezm region and describe the leading etiological agents identified in the dissertation.

Materials and methods. The dissertation presents regional data on bacteriuria for 2021 and 2022. The clinical study included 80 pregnant women with asymptomatic bacteriuria and 30 healthy pregnant women in the control group. Microbiological investigations were used to identify urinary microorganisms. The regional prevalence and reported distribution of pathogens were summarized descriptively according to the dissertation data.

Results. The reported prevalence of bacteriuria among pregnant women in the Khorezm region was 19.8% in 2021 and 26.2% in 2022, reflecting an increase of approximately 1.3 times. *Escherichia coli* was the leading reported pathogen, accounting for 45.2% in 2021 and 33.8% in 2022. The dissertation also describes other microorganisms, including *Staphylococcus epidermidis*, *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, *Enterobacter* spp. and other opportunistic bacteria. The findings indicate that the regional etiological profile includes several organisms and that *E. coli* remained the predominant pathogen in both reported years.

Conclusion. The dissertation data indicate an increase in the reported prevalence of bacteriuria among pregnant women in the Khorezm region between 2021 and 2022. *E. coli* was the most frequently reported pathogen. These findings support the importance of timely antenatal screening and microbiological identification of urinary pathogens. Where bacteriuria is detected, clinical management should be guided by appropriate clinical assessment and antimicrobial susceptibility results. Reporting of denominators

and statistical comparisons should accompany these prevalence estimates in future publications to facilitate interpretation and comparison with other populations.

Keywords: asymptomatic bacteriuria; pregnancy; prevalence; *Escherichia coli*; uropathogens; Khorezm region