

Violence among pregnant women is a potential risk factor for low birth weight in full-term neonates: a population-based retrospective cohort study

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Abstract

Objective To examine whether the risk of low birth weight stratified by preterm and term deliveries was different between pregnant women exposed or unexposed to violence. **Design** A population-based retrospective cohort study. **Population** Four national databases in Taiwan were linked for analysis. **Method** A total of 1,322 subjects associated with a report of domestic violence during pregnancy were compared with 485,981 subjects without any record of reported domestic violence. **Results** The percentage of low birth weight in the group exposed to domestic violence was significantly higher than in the unexposed group with full-term delivery (48.6% vs. 46.7%, $P=0.001$), while there was no statistically significant difference with preterm delivery. Multivariable logistic regression analysis showed that pregnant women exposed to domestic violence had an OR of 1.37 (95% CI: 1.05, 1.79) for low birth weight in full-term delivery; however, domestic violence was not significantly associated with low birth weight in preterm delivery. **Conclusions** Women whose full-term neonate had low birth weight should be high-priority targets for domestic violence screening in the perinatal health care system.

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