

Abstract citation ID: kae144.1235

Health literacy of pregnant women in Hungary

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Health literacy determines our state of health and through this our quality of life. The health behavior of women of reproductive age should be treated with priority, since the lifestyle of pregnant women shows a correlation with the occurrence of premature birth and intrauterine development, and also between fetal development and the occurrence of chronic diseases in adulthood. The aim of our research is to explore the factors influencing the health behavior of pregnant women, to analyze regional differences, and to identify the causes of regional differences and inequalities. During a prospective, cross-sectional study, the health behavior of pregnant women living in Hungary was assessed using a questionnaire. In the course of our research, we examined health literacy using two measuring instruments, the Chew questionnaire and The Newest Vital Sign test. A total of 2,000 questionnaires were distributed of which 1,655 evaluable questionnaires were returned, the willingness to answer was 75%. The most people considered their own health to be good or very good (59.7%). 59.5% of the respondents changed their health behavior because of their pregnancy, mainly for the sake of the health of the fetus. 18.1% of pregnant women most likely have insufficient, 15.0% probably limited and 48.1% most likely have adequate functional health literacy. Age, education, place of residence and financial situation of pregnant women show a significant correlation with health literacy. Our results confirmed that sociodemographic factors, especially age and education, significantly influence the health literacy, perceived health status and health behavior of pregnant women. The two health literacy questionnaires we use can be combined well with each other and complement each other. The

results greatly contribute to the development of health literacy, and thus to the development of individual and community-level strategies for improving health behavior in the field of pregnant women's care.

Key messages:

- Health literacy of pregnant women in Hungary.
- Health literacy in health promotion.