

## VARIATION OF VITAMIN A STATUS IN PREGNANCY

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The variation of vitamin A status with progression in pregnancy was studied in 93 pregnant women in the age group 15-45 years living in Colombo and its suburbs.

The pregnant women were categorised into three groups according to the monthly income per family. Their vitamin A status was compared with that of non-pregnant women categorised in the same manner. The vitamin A status of pregnant women was assessed in the early and late stages of pregnancy.

Pregnant women in the lowest income group (less than Rs.1000/- per month) had the lowest initial serum vitamin A concentration. Similar values were also seen in non-pregnant women in the same income group.

A marked decrease in serum vitamin A and retinol binding protein levels with progression in pregnancy was noted in all three groups. The values in the lowest income group decrease further to very low levels. This decrease in serum vitamin A may have adverse effects both on the foetus and on the mother and could be prevented by giving vitamin supplements.

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