

## NO-1

### **Lack of Knowledge about Contraception and Pregnancy in Adolescent Girls with Congenital Heart Disease – There is Room for Improvement**

*Burström Å. (1,2), Acuña Mora M. (3,4), Sparud-Lundin C. (3), Rydberg A. (5), Hanseus K. (6), Moons P. (3,4), Bratt EL (3,7)*

*Institution for Neurobiology, Care Science and Society, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden (1); Department of Pediatric Cardiology, Astrid Lindgren Children's Hospital, Stockholm, Sweden (2); Institute of Health and Care Sciences, University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg, Sweden (3); KU Leuven Department of Public Health and Primary Care, Leuven, Belgium (4); Department of Clinical Sciences, Pediatrics, Umeå University, Umeå, Sweden (5); Department of Pediatric Cardiology, Skåne University Hospital, Lund, Sweden (6); Department of Pediatric Cardiology, The Queen Silvia Children's Hospital, Sweden (7).*

#### Introduction

For adolescent girls with congenital heart disease (CHD), knowledge about contraception, sex and future pregnancies is imperative in order to avoid unplanned high-risk pregnancies, complications related to pregnancies and unnecessary fears. It is essential that pediatric health care providers address these issues during adolescence. They should invite young persons to ask questions and to secure that they receive relevant and adequate information related to their specific CHD.

#### Objectives

To investigate the knowledge of adolescent girls with a CHD about contraception and the risks during pregnancy.

#### Method

In this cross-sectional multicenter study, participants from 4 university hospitals in Sweden were recruited. The Knowledge Scale for Adults with Congenitally Malformed Hearts (KnoCoMH) was completed by girls 14-18 years of age with a CHD. Items addressing sex and pregnancy were included in the analysis. Two additional items were added, addressing whether they received any information about contraception and pregnancy and if they discussed future pregnancies in relations to their heart disease during their medical check-ups. Statistical analysis was performed by using Chi-Square test.

#### Result

In total, 91 girls with a mean age of 15.9 years ( $\pm 1.1$ ) participated. The distribution of CHD complexity was as follows: mild 36% ( $n=33$ ), moderate 45% ( $n=41$ ) or complex 19% ( $n=17$ ). Only 8% ( $n=7$ ) stated that they received information about contraceptives in relation to their condition. Similar findings were seen regarding pregnancies, where only 15% ( $n=13$ ) received information. Girls with moderate and complex CHD ( $n=13$ ) received information about pregnancies to a higher extent compared to girls with a mild CHD ( $n=0$ ) ( $p=0.001$ ). About 64% ( $n=58$ ) was aware that sexual activity would not aggravate their condition; still 36% was unaware whether sexual activity could worsen their CHD.

#### Conclusion

Very few participants received information about contraception and pregnancy from their pediatric health care providers. Information and education about contraception, sexual activity and future pregnancy should be provided during adolescence, regardless complexity of the disease to avoid misconceptions and misunderstandings. If needed, adolescent girls should be referred to a specialized gynecologist.