

Abstract

Rubella is predominantly a childhood disease and is endemic throughout the world. However, the primary public health concern of rubella virus infection is its teratogenicity. The development of a vaccine and implementation of vaccination strategies, have substantially reduced the incidence of the disease and in turn, congenital rubella syndrome in developed countries.

In Sri Lanka, immunization against rubella was introduced in 1996. Though the immunization against rubella was carried out since 1996, no community based serological studies have been done to determine seroprevalence of rubella antibodies among females of child bearing age group after introduction of the vaccine.

Clinical diagnosis of rubella may be difficult. Serodiagnosis is important to confirm the disease. Serosurveys could determine the prevalence of IgG antibodies to rubella, among females of child bearing age. Therefore, this study was conducted to determine the seroprevalence of rubella antibody among females of child bearing age, in the community in Kaduwela Medical Officer of Health area.

One hundred & seventy six females between the ages 15-49 years participated in this study. The details of the research project was explained to the participants & informed, written consent was obtained. An

interviewer administered questionnaire was used to determine the immunization status & socio-demographic characters of the study population. Blood (1ml) was drawn from each eligible individual to determine the presence of IgG antibodies to rubella, using antigen coated micro well based EIA kit. SPSS version was used for analysis of data & prevalence was determined by using percentages.

The prevalence of rubella IgG amongst this study group was 89.8%. The rubella vaccine was administered to the 18 (10.2%) susceptible participants, who did not have immunity in this community.

More extensive studies that include the male population should also be carried out to evaluate the seroprevalence of anti rubella antibodies in this community.