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PROFILE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF NEWBORNS DIAGNOSED WITH MICROCEPHALY IN RS IN THE LAST 5 YEARS

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INTRODUCTION

Microcephaly is a condition characterized by a reduction in the newborn's head circumference, which can result in variable neurological impairments, including motor, cognitive and sensory difficulties, depending on the extent and location of the brain lesions. This condition has different origins, such as viral infections during pregnancy (example: Zika virus), teratogenic substances used by the pregnant woman, pathogenic genetic variants, as well as different combined causes that affect the individual. In Rio Grande do Sul (RS), outbreaks highlight the need to better identify the profile of these newborns.

OBJECTIVES

To describe the profile and characteristics of newborns diagnosed with microcephaly born in Rio Grande do Sul between 2019 and 2024, focusing on health conditions associated with microcephaly and related factors.

METHODOLOGY

This is a cross-sectional, descriptive study, carried out through a literature review and consultation of public databases of the Federal Government. The following will be analyzed: gender, age group of mothers, occurrence of prematurity, diagnosis of Zika virus and alterations in the Central Nervous System. The technical data was obtained from the official DATASUS website, using information from the Public Health Event Registries, integrated into the Ministry of Health.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

246 newborns were registered in Rio Grande do Sul in the period analyzed, of which 142 were male, 103 were female and 1 had no sex informed. Among the mothers, 51.2% (126) were aged between 20 and 30 and 87.8% (216) had a single pregnancy. It is noteworthy that 57.7% (142) of the babies were born underweight, possibly due to prematurity associated with microcephaly. Only 1.6% (4) had a laboratory diagnosis of Zika, since microcephaly, linked to the virus, results from congenital exposure during pregnancy. In addition, 29.3% (72) had alterations to the nervous system or other congenital conditions; of these, 30.5% (22) did not have microcephaly, while 68.7% (169) only had this condition. Historically, in 2019 there were 25.2% (62) cases, while in 2024 there were 5.2% (13) cases.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Based on the data described, it can be seen that in RS between 2019 and 2024, microcephaly was more prevalent in male newborns, born to mothers aged between 20 and 30 with a single pregnancy, associated with malnutrition as a risk factor, showing an improvement over the years. Furthermore, the influence of microcephaly on the weight of babies, congenital alterations and the Central Nervous System as a result of the disease is clear. Thus, campaigns to promote the care of pregnant women, such as prenatal care and awareness of health access, are suggested as a way of preventing the disease.

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