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**A STUDY ON PREVALENCE OF IRON DEFICIENCY ANAEMIA
AMONG CHILDREN AT BASE HOSPITAL KALMUNAI NORTH,
AMPARA**

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Abstract

Children are particularly vulnerable to iron-deficiency anemia because of their increased iron requirements during periods of rapid growth, especially in the first five years of life. Sri Lanka, a lower-middle-income country with a high prevalence of under nutrition mostly in the children. Currently Sri Lanka is facing a triple burden of malnutrition and the current food and nutrition insecurity is turning on a red alert. This study explores the prevalence of iron deficiency anemia among paediatric patients at Base Hospital Kalmunai North. A cross sectional analytical study was carried out among children (101), age group of 1-14 who attended the paediatric clinic and admitted to paediatric ward of Base Hospital, Kalmunai North over a period of 6 months from January to June 2022. The iron deficiency anaemia among children was diagnosed by clinical examinations and the following blood parameters; full blood count (Hb), serum ferritin (SF) level and C - reactive protein (CRP) were measured. WHO defined cut-off levels were used to assess the anaemia (Hb < 11g/dl) iron deficiency (SF < 15 µg/l). To categorize the degree of anemia, the following cut-off points were used: 10.0-10.9 g/dl- mild anemia; 7.0-9.9 g/dl - moderate anemia; <7 g/dl -severe anemia. According to the findings of the study, the prevalence of iron deficiency anemia was 7.9% of the paediatric patients at Base Hospital in Kalmunai North. In comparison to previously published national prevalence rates in Sri Lanka (7.3 %), the IDA prevalence is greater in this region. It was most common in children between the ages of 1-6 with moderate IDA (4 %). Children between the ages of 1 and 3 had mild to moderate IDA. Further studies must be done on the causes for IDA and need awareness programmes on nutritional education among the children and the parents.

Keywords: *children, iron deficiency anemia, prevalence, nutritional*