



The Role of the Caregiver from Different Perspectives during Pregnancy

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Abstract

Background: During the gestation period, the pregnant woman needs attention directed mainly to her needs and care until the moment of delivery, where the role played by her companion as a caregiver, whether a family member, health personnel, specialist or herself, will be of vital importance for the development of the fetus, as well as for the health of the mother.

Objective: The objective of the research is to argue the importance of each type of caregiver, the role they play and their contribution to the well-being of the pregnant woman.

Material and Methods: An observational and descriptive study was carried out focused on understanding the role of the caregiver in the pregnant woman, which made it possible to characterize the object of study.

Results: The impact that caregivers have on different levels of health, the diversity of their needs and the importance of the caregiver are reflected.

Conclusions: The presence of the caregiver is of vital importance, each pregnant woman can count on a support network that accompanies her on one of the most significant journeys of life. Due to its direct implication on the health and social consequences of the pregnant woman in coping with the different difficulties of the pregnancy period and access to different prenatal care and guidance, successfully reaching the end of her pregnancy.

Keywords: Pregnant woman; Caregiver; Importance; Challenges

Introduction

Pregnancy is a crucial period in a woman's life, marked by profound physical, emotional and social changes. Among the most important support figures is the caregiver, a person who provides assistance, protection and company to the pregnant woman. The role of the caregiver in pregnancy is complex and multifaceted, covering physical, emotional, practical and social aspects. The caregiver plays a crucial role during pregnancy, not only in terms of physical and emotional support, but also as a facilitator of the health and well-being of both mother and baby.

Caregivers can take many forms, from family and friends to health professionals and emotional support specialists, while their own self-care is vital to maintaining optimal health. As the caregiver is the main mediator of the health-wellbeing relationship of the pregnant woman, he/she also faces the conflicts and problems that may develop during the gestation period, helping the pregnant mother during this journey, the importance of his/her presence during this period is highlighted. Accordingly, a caregiver is defined as a person who is responsible for helping with basic activities in the life of a person (elderly, sick or disabled, or with problems coping with life), who cannot

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function or take care of themselves, or who, due to medical indication, requires permanent company. Using this term of caregiver, we focus on the role of the caregiver of a pregnant woman, who exists to help or meet the needs of the pregnant woman, being the person in charge of controlling her well-being, whether due to physical limitations or difficulties in coping with life, she requires this assistance. During this period of gestation, for the most part, she requires the support of a person to be able to meet and supply her needs, creating a safe environment that promotes a positive and healthy experience. The caregiver works in collaboration with the mother, family members and health professionals to develop a personalized care plan that meets the specific needs of the pregnant woman. The caregiver must be an empathetic person, as a main characteristic, full of patience to accompany the pregnancy, full of emotional and cultural ups and downs, full responsibility for the fulfillment of multiple tasks, without neglecting the health and well-being of the same, who performs the function of caregiver (in the case of the partner or family members) during this time of pregnancy. The objective of the following article is to argue the importance of each type of caregiver, the role they play and their contribution to the well-being of the pregnant woman.

Material and Method

An observational and descriptive study was conducted to understand the role of caregivers in pregnant women. Theoretical and empirical methods were used to characterize the object of study.

Development

The role of the caregiver from different perspectives

The caregiver, whether a health professional or a family member, must be committed to the well-being of the pregnant woman, providing a safe and loving environment that promotes a healthy pregnancy and a successful birth. In parallel to this, the caregiver must take into account important aspects such as the context in which this process takes place, especially observing the practices, knowledge, customs, values, beliefs, experiences and culture that the pregnant woman has to take care of her health during this stage and that have been acquired through the experience of living with her family or closest people. In this important sense, self-care for pregnant women is a crucial complement to this support, allowing pregnant women to take an active role in their health and that of their babies in order to contribute to the care related to their health and well-being. When we refer to a person who needs support, in the case of a pregnant woman, the caregiver can be represented by: her partner, a family member, a health professional or a specialist; thus establishing that this person takes charge of the demand for her needs while the gestation process

lasts until delivery, and in the case of all health personnel, in maintaining an optimal state of health-well-being of the pregnant woman, applying specialized care and attention. In accordance with the role of the caregiver from the perspective of the health personnel, whether specialist or nurse, he/she will provide guidance and make necessary visits to the pregnant woman to check her condition, providing medical care, support and education to the pregnant woman, as well as the detection of the same. Where in certain occasions her hospital admission is necessary, determined by the observation of risks that counteract the quality of the pregnancy, whether due to objective, evident or diagnosed problems. Their responsibilities include:

- **Prenatal care:** Performing regular exams, monitoring fetal growth, and addressing any concerns or complications.
- **Education:** providing information and guidance on pregnancy, childbirth and newborn care.
- **Emotional support:** providing emotional support and comfort during the ups and downs of pregnancy.
- **Resource referral:** Connecting pregnant women with other resources and support services, such as support groups and assistance programs. In accordance with the work and practices carried out by nursing staff, mention is made of the performance of independent nursing actions, which complement and reinforce the role of the caregiver in caring for the pregnant woman. In relation to the role of the partner or family member as caregiver, they not only provide emotional and practical support, but also actively participate in the pregnancy process and preparation for the arrival of the baby, with the following being of vital importance:
 - **Emotional Support:** A partner is a vital source of comfort and understanding, helping a pregnant woman navigate the emotional and physical changes of pregnancy.
 - **Active Participation:** Attending medical appointments, childbirth preparation classes, and decisions about prenatal care are ways in which the partner is directly involved in the process. The role of self-care for pregnant women is an essential aspect of caregiving during pregnancy. It involves the pregnant woman taking proactive steps to care for her own physical and mental health. Self-care practices include:
 - **Nutrition:** Eat a healthy diet rich in fruits, vegetables and lean proteins.
 - **Physical activity:** Participate in regular physical activities recommended for pregnant women.
 - **Rest:** Get enough sleep and rest when needed.
 - **Stress management:** Engage in stress-reducing activities, such as yoga, meditation, or spending time in nature.
 - **Mental health:** Seek professional help if you experience feelings of anxiety or depression.

Pregnancy is a period of transformation for both the pregnant woman and those around her. The role of the caregiver, from



different perspectives in this context, takes on fundamental and important relevance, being the first lookout for any difficulties that the pregnant woman may present. The caregiver's constant accompaniment at every stage of pregnancy. From the first weeks to delivery, their emotional support is essential. Listening to the pregnant woman's concerns, offering words of encouragement and sharing the joy of pregnancy milestones strengthens the bond between the two. Their active participation in reducing stress due to the emotionally overwhelming nature of pregnancy helps relieve stress by providing a shoulder to lean on, their constant presence and understanding contribute to the emotional stability of the pregnant woman. They act as a bridge between the pregnant woman and the medical team. Accompanying the pregnant woman to appointments, asking relevant questions ensures that she understands the medical instructions. This is especially crucial in situations of language or cultural barriers, helping to implement medical recommendations (such as taking vitamins, performing tests and attending prenatal classes). Their active participation improves adherence to the care plan. Physical support, from household chores and preparing healthy meals, can improve a pregnant woman's physical health, and emotional support can improve her mental health and overall well-being, which is important for an optimal, healthy pregnancy and birth.

The contribution of the caregiver from their different perspectives or roles in their performance, in the care and attention of the pregnant woman facilitates a better quality of life towards her optimal health and well-being. Studies have shown that the support of caregivers during pregnancy is associated with positive results: lower risk of premature birth and low birth weight. The support and active participation of the caregiver, partner or closest family members are crucial for the emotional and physical well-being of the pregnant woman and the healthy development of the pregnancy, so it is essential to encourage involvement in the entire process, which includes preparation for childbirth during the third trimester. It is important to prepare for the birth process, which includes learning about the different stages of labor, the signs that labor is near and how to recognize them. Childbirth preparation classes can be useful for pregnant women and their partners. In these classes, breathing techniques, birthing positions and how to cope with pain are taught. Accompanying the pregnant woman to medical appointments and actively participating in her well-being is essential. Pregnancy can be emotionally challenging. Pregnant women may experience mood swings, anxiety, and worry. Caregivers such as partners or other close family members should be available to listen and provide support throughout the process [1-8].

Health personnel such as doctors, obstetricians and nurses play a crucial role in prenatal care. They carry out regular check-ups, monitor fetal development and provide specific advice, in cooperation with other caregivers, such as family members and

partners, to provide comprehensive care to pregnant women, which is essential to ensure that pregnant women receive the support and resources they need for a healthy pregnancy and birth; presenting a wide range of important activities such as: education about pregnancy and childbirth - both processes can empower the pregnant woman and prepare her for birth. Childbirth preparation courses and information sessions are valuable resources. Monitoring health ensures that the pregnant woman receives adequate and regular prenatal care, identifying and managing any complications in time, educating about healthy practices, adequate nutrition and emotional support offers a support network that helps the pregnant woman manage stress and emotional changes during pregnancy. Health promotion encourages learning healthy habits and a lifestyle that benefits both mother and baby. Health surveillance through monitoring the health status of the pregnant woman, the development of the pregnancy and the coordination of care through joint work with other health professionals guarantees comprehensive care in order to achieve a healthy lifestyle towards childbirth and the newborn.

In addition to the support of caregivers, self-care is essential for the well-being of the pregnant woman. It includes taking care of her physical health through a healthy diet, exercising regularly and getting enough sleep, participating in activities that reduce stress, such as yoga, meditation or spending time in nature, joining support groups or connecting with other pregnant women can provide emotional support and a sense of community. Seeking professional help if she experiences feelings of anxiety or depression, taking action that promotes health and at the same time does not contradict her social environment and herself with respect to the support she has received. Self-care is associated with better health outcomes for the pregnant woman and her child, such as a lower risk of preterm birth and low birth weight, and can help reduce health care costs by preventing complications and promoting healthy outcomes. In short, women experience greater satisfaction with their pregnancy and feel more prepared for childbirth and motherhood.

Conclusions

The role of the caregiver in pregnancy, encompassing the perspective of the family, the partner, the health personnel and the pregnant woman herself. We have seen how each of these caregivers brings a unique dimension to the well-being of the mother and the unborn child. Reflecting on the caregiver in its broadest sense, we recognize a mosaic of relationships and responsibilities. The partner, as a constant companion, offers a love that strengthens and comforts. The family or closest person, with their unbreakable bonds, provides a safe haven and unconditional support. The health care personnel, with their knowledge and compassion, guide the path to a healthy pregnancy and birth. And not least, the pregnant woman, who, in her role of



self-care, becomes the first and most essential caregiver of her own well-being and that of the unborn child. Each of these actors has proven to be a fundamental pillar in the gestation process, contributing their uniqueness to the common good. Strengthening the care system ensures that each pregnant woman receives the comprehensive support she deserves.

Declaration of conflict of interest and ethical conflicts

The authors declare that this manuscript is original, does not contain elements classified or restricted for disclosure or for the institution in which it was produced, and has not been previously published, nor is it being submitted for evaluation by another publisher. The authors are responsible for the content of the article and it contains no plagiarism, conflicts of interest or ethics.

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