Infection and disease after perinatal exposure to Chlamydia trachomatis in Nairobi, Kenya

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Abstract:

A cohort of 49 infants exposed to maternal chlamydial infection and 40 nonexposed infants was studied after birth for a mean of 3.3 +/- 1.5 and 3 +/- 1.7 mo, respectively. Eighteen (37%) exposed infants had at least one positive culture for Chlamydia trachomatis, whereas C. trachomatis was not isolated from any of the nonexposed infants. Eighteen (37%) exposed infants developed ophthalmia neonatorum (n = 12) or infant conjunctivitis (n = 7), compared with six (15%) of the nonexposed infants (P = .04). Six (12%) exposed infants developed pneumonia, compared with none of the 40 nonexposed infants (P = .05). One infant in the exposed group died during follow-up. These results suggest that appreciable infant morbidity in Kenya may be associated with the high prevalence of maternal chlamydial infection.