PII-3: CHILDHOOD UNDERNUTRITION: PREDICTORS OF POOR NUTRITION STATUS THAT SHAPE CLINICAL INTERVENTIONS

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Abstract:
Introduction: Purpose/Aims: To describe community and household-level risk factors for childhood undernutrition in an indigenous population of rural Bolivia. Research Questions: This investigation sought to (1) identify risk factors for childhood undernutrition in a rural population of Cochabamba, Bolivia, and (2) document the perspectives of family caregivers of undernourished children concerning the existence of undernutrition in the community. Significance: Increased susceptibility to undernutrition is informed by a complex set of community and household level variables characteristic of this setting. Identifying these predictors of poor nutrition status is critical to the development of interventions within this community as well as other populations facing similar barriers to adequate nutrition.

Method(s): Surveys were conducted in summer 2008 and 2009 with 40 family caregivers of undernourished children who participated in a nutrition rehabilitation program. Variables included access to and treatment of drinking water, diet recall, recent history of diarrheal or respiratory illness, and breastfeeding history. Caregivers were asked open-ended questions regarding the incidence of undernutrition in the community and suggestions for improvement. Data analysis involves descriptive and multiple regression analyses to determine any significant correlations between risk factors and actual undernutrition status as indicated by anthropometric z-scores.

Results: Analysis of the 2008 data shows that the majority of children in the study drink water from an untreated source, have no access to sanitation facilities, have a recent history of diarrheal or respiratory illness, and consume a diet lacking in calories and protein. Analysis of the 2009 data is ongoing and will be completed by January 2010.

Discussion & Conclusions: This study addresses a gap in research of undernutrition among rural, indigenous populations. Our findings have implications for other populations experiencing increased vulnerability to poor nutritional status due to environmental factors and disparity. The study will inform the practice of nurses and other health professionals working with these populations to provide contextually-appropriate care.

Abstract History:
This abstract has not been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at the SNRS or other scientific meeting.

Financial Disclosure:
No, I (or a member of my immediate family) have not received something of value* from or own stock (or stock options) in a commercial company or institution related directly or indirectly to the subject of my presentation.
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