



The Impact of Maternal Addiction on Fetal Health: A Case Study - Care Approach Based on Jean Watson's Human Caring Theory

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Introduction and Objective: Maternal addiction to drugs during pregnancy can have serious consequences for both maternal and fetal health. Given the increasing prevalence of addiction in society and its impacts on family health, the aim of this study is to analyze the effects of addiction on maternal and fetal health and to provide care interventions using Jean Watson's "Human Caring" theory as a framework.

Method: This qualitative case-study research was conducted in 2024 based on Watson's Human Caring model for nursing care of a 17-year-old pregnant mother who was in the 21st week of her second pregnancy. She faced multiple challenges due to a four-year addiction to heroin and an unstable financial situation. This mother had one child, and her husband was also addicted. She presented with visible bruises and signs of severe malnutrition and anemia. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, medical history reviews, and clinical assessments, including evaluations of nutritional status, hemoglobin levels, and fetal growth assessments via ultrasound.

Findings: The identified needs and problems of the patient, such as dyspnea, anxiety, malnutrition, and severe anemia, were significantly addressed using Watson's care model, focusing on the ten Caritas factors. The condition of the fetus was concerning, and ultrasounds indicated fetal growth delays. Multiple interventions based on Watson's theory, including the establishment of emotional and supportive connections, therapeutic care, psychological counseling, and continuous monitoring of the mother and fetus's status contributed to improving both maternal and fetal conditions.

Conclusion: The findings of this study indicate that poverty, addiction, and malnutrition not only affect the physical health of the mother but can also be detrimental to fetal development. This article also offers recommendations for improving medical and social care in such circumstances to enhance the quality of life and welfare for at-risk pregnant mothers.

Keywords: Addiction, Pregnancy, Fetal Health, Human Caring Theory, Nursing Care