

"Quality of information within pre-natal diagnostics"

ABSTRACT

Object : Comparing the easily – accessible information, i.e the reviews, newspapers, internet sites with no scientific character, to the scientific evidence on the pre-natal diagnosis methods, in order to see if the divulgative information is correct, complete and true.

Research strategy: Information about the same constants – the technique, the pregnancy period, the indication, identifiable anomalies, risk and accuracy have been analyzed for each technique (screening test, invasive tests and echography).

Scientific fonts found in divulgative articles published between the year 2000 and the first few months of 2004 have been compared.

Results : Generally, it has been noticed that, as far as the technique and pregnancy period, the information found both in the most cases is substantially correct and complete, information on indications and anomalies identifiable by the test are on the contrary incomplete, confused and often superficial.

Indeed, as far as risk and accuracy information are often omitted; if present, they are expressed correctly but incomplete, rarely even wrong and confused.

Conclusions: It seems that the biggest loss of the easy access information often is being imprecise and incomplete.

The attempt of the journalist himself seems wrong, in fact if he wanted to write a precise and complete article he should necessarily put all pertinent information, supported by scientific evidence; if he only wanted to mention the above quoted technique he should above all focus on the general aspect of the test and avoid to only mention some of the correlated information. The analyzed articles represent a compromise between the two ways of writing often showing incomplete and inexact information