

Can a selenium deficiency affect the pathogenesis of cholestasis in pregnancy?
Puede influir una carencia de selenio en la patogenia de la colestasis gravídica?

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In search of an environmental factor which modulates the expressivity of cholestasis of pregnancy and explains the seasonal and annual variations observed in Finland and Chile, the authors measured selenium (Se) concentration in the plasma and erythrocytes by atomic absorption spectrophotometry and the activity of the glutation peroxidase enzyme dependent on Se (GSH-Px) by a spectrophotometric method in 10 patients with cholestasis of pregnancy, 22 normal pregnant women, 43 non pregnant women and in 15 men, all of whom had normal weight/height, and similar ages, ethnic and geographic origin. Blood samples were obtained weekly from the pregnant women during the third trimester and 24-72 hours postpartum. Results: In non pregnant women and in men plasma Se was 0.83 ± 0.02 $\mu\text{mol/l}$ (range 0.6-1.2) and the GSH-Px activity was 306 ± 5 U/L (range 203-459). Both parameters were correlated and were similar to those of other populations whose ingestion of Se is low (Finland, New Zealand, and