

Antenatal screening tests performance during COVID-19 pandemic: results of a cross sectional study

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OBJECTIVES

We aimed to explore antenatal tests (ANT) utilization and performance during the pandemic in both nulliparous and multiparous women, and compare ANT performance before and during the pandemic in multiparous patients.

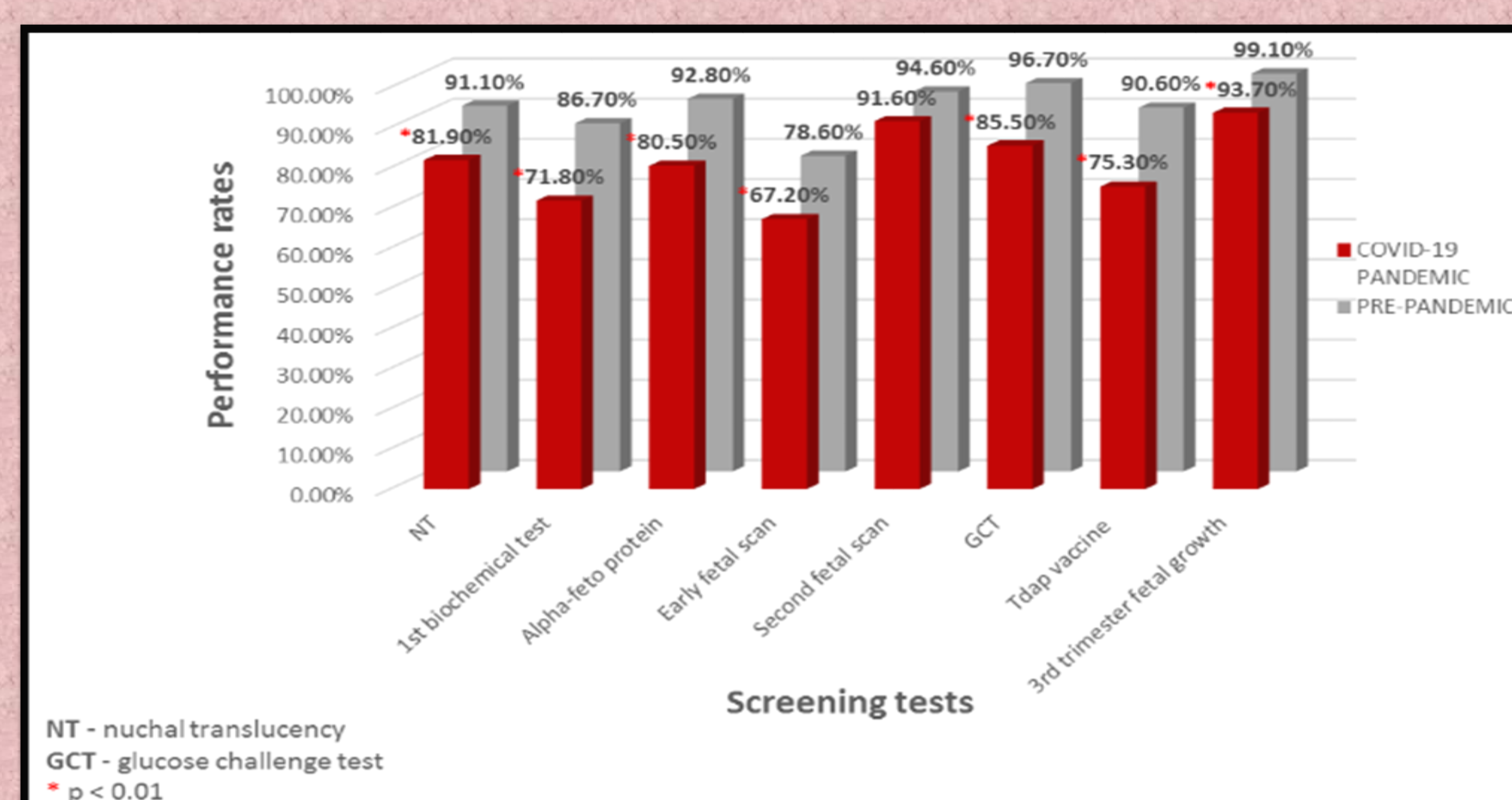
METHODS

A medical questionnaire regarding ANT performance was distributed among 500 women.

RESULTS

Two hundred thirty-four (46%) women did not perform at least one screening test during their pregnancy. Of these, 42% related it with the COVID-19 pandemic; 18.8% were anxious about possible exposure, 16.2% reported medical staff isolations and cancelations, 5.6% were infected with COVID-19 or were self-isolating, and 4.3% were due to challenges related to local quarantine. Of our cohort, 9.2% reported refusing emergency department (ED) referral due to anxiety regarding possible exposure.

Only 44.3% of multiparous women performed all the tests during the pandemic, compared with 70.8% before the pandemic ($p < 0.001$); almost half of this inadequate screening performance was related to the pandemic. Women who reported pandemic-related inadequate antenatal screening tended to be: multiparous (AOR=6.43), to have low-risk pregnancies (aOR=2.6) and part of Muslim or Druze minorities (aOR=4.89 and 3.83, respectively).



CONCLUSION

This study highlights the negative effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on antenatal screening test performance especially among women of minority ethnic backgrounds.