ABSTRACT

This study was conducted in remote villages of Thong Pha Poom District near the Thai-Myanmar border, in Kanchanaburi Province during March, 1998. One hundred and forty-one mothers were interviewed and anthropometry measurement was done on their children.

Prevalence of malnutrition (combined first degree and second degree) was 36.9% by weight for age, 42.5% by height for age and 17.8% by weight for height. There were no third degree malnutrition cases. By using MUAC, the proportion of malnutrition was 39.1%.

Among 141 children, 32 children with malaria infection were significantly associated with malnutrition classified by weight for age and weight for height.

More than half of mothers showed comparatively high knowledge and practice on feeding habits to their children and prevention of malaria. Better knowledge and practice on feeding practice brought better nutritional status. Although knowledge and practice on malaria prevention was not directly related to nutritional status, it showed influence on the prevalence of malaria infection.

Moreover, children in smaller families where young mothers lived suffered more malnutrition. Among young mothers, level of knowledge and practice on feeding habits were low.

In this study, risk factors like children of young mothers, residing in deep rural area and malaria were identified. Even though it was not included in the study, some evidence of migration of population was noted.

As results of this study show, it is a critically important time to solve the problem with integrated health care approach and well organized coordination.