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## Maternal knowledge, attitudes, and practices as predictors of diarrhoeal disease in Saudi children < 3 years of age.

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### **Abstract**

Diarrhoeal disease continues to be a leading cause of morbidity and mortality in many developing countries. This study demonstrates the importance of behavioral risk factors as determinants of diarrhoeal disease. The study design used is incidence-base, case-control design. The cases were obtained from Primary Health Care Centers (PHCC) in Makkah area, Saudi Arabia, during October 1994 to January 1995. The studied sample consisted of 319 cases and 312 controls < 3 years of age. The results showed that mothers of cases were significant inferior knowledge about aetiology and transmission of diarrhoeal disease than did mothers of controls. Poor hygiene was significantly high in households of cases for two items; disposal of faeces in latrine and presence of toilet papers ( $p < 0.05$ ). Assuming causal association between the risk factors and diarrhoeal disease, up to 60% of diarrhoeal disease in the study population may be attributable to the studied behavioral factors