Abstract

Objective. To determine the prevalence of anemia and iron status among Chilean women of childbearing age between 1981 and 2010. Materials and methods. Calculation of the prevalence of anemia and iron status was based on multiple cross-sectional iron absorption studies performed in 888 women during this period of time. All studies included measurements of hemoglobin, mean corpuscular volume, zinc protoporphyrin, percentage of transferrin saturation and serum ferritin. Data were grouped by decade (1981-1990, 1991-2000, and 2001-2010). Results. Prevalence of anemia for these decades was 9, 6 and 10%, respectively (p=NS). Iron deficiency anemia was the main cause of anemia in all periods (55, 85 and 75%, respectively; p=NS). A high prevalence of women with normal iron status was observed for all periods (64, 69, and 67, respectively; p=NS). Prevalence of iron deficiency without anemia in 1981-1990, 1991-2000 and 2001-2010 was 7, 20 and 12%, respectively (p<0.05). Finally, prevalence of iron depleted stores was 20, 6 and 10%, respectively (p<0.05). Conclusions. Prevalence of iron deficiency anemia in Chilean women of childbearing age was mild between 1981 and 2010. More than 60% of childbearing age women presented normal iron status in all periods. However, prevalence of iron depleted stores was moderate during 1981-1990, and was mild during 1991-2000 and 2001-2010.

Keywords

Prevalence, anemia, iron, iron deficiency, Chile