Key References on Efficacy and Safety

The efficacy of newborn supplementation with an oral dose of 50,000 IU of vitamin A within 48 hours of birth has been studied in randomized clinical trials in Indonesia, India, and Bangladesh. Each study reported reductions in infant mortality of 15 percent or more in the first six months of life. To date, data on the impact of newborn vitamin A supplementation (NVAS) from Africa remains inconclusive and further evidence is needed.

Studies of short- and long-term side effects of NVAS have not found significant safety concerns. Appearance of bulging fontanels has been reported among one to seven percent of infants under six months of age who were dosed with vitamin A. This bulge diminished without treatment within 48 hours, with no increase in intracranial pressure. Long-term mental, psychomotor, behavioral, and growth effects have been assessed in a follow-up study in Indonesia, with no signs of a negative impact at three years of age.

Key Documents

The following papers are the key references reporting on the evidence of the efficacy and safety of NVAS for South Asia. Links are provided to the abstract or the full text when available.

Efficacy:

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