

Original Research Article

Study of self-drug administration among 3rd professional medical students

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Received: 03 May 2021

Revised: 16 May 2021

Accepted: 17 May 2021

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ABSTRACT

Background: Self-medication is very common in our day-to-day life which is an unhealthy and risky practice. Present study was done to determine the knowledge, attitude and practice among 3rd professional medical students of Shaheed Nirmal Mahto Medical College and Hospital, Dhanbad.

Methods: A questionnaire related to self-medication with consent was prepared and distributed among the students of 3rd professional. Data was collected and analysed the results expressed as counts and percentages.

Results: Total 50 students participated in the study for taking self-medication and was no need to visit the doctor for minor illness. In maximum students, source of information of the drugs used for self-medication pharmacological based and learning process in the college. The source of drug was medical store. Most of the students took self-medication for loose motion and headache followed by cough, cold and fever. Out of total 50 students, most of the students took paracetamol tablet as self-medication.

Conclusions: This study showed that third professional medical students after they studied pharmacological books, they do not use any wrong medicine as self-medication. High level of awareness of 3rd professional students has minimized self-medication.

Keywords: Self-medication, Questionnaire, 3rd professional

INTRODUCTION

Self-medication is defined as the use of medication by a patient on his own initiative or on the advice of a pharmacist or a lay person instead of consulting a medical practitioner (WHO guidelines, 2000).¹ It has been observed that medical and paramedical students are commonly involved in the practice of self-medication, without complete knowledge about the therapy they are taking.² Non-prescription drugs amongst youth, especially in students are being misused due to exposure to media and advertisements. It has become a serious ailment

raising the concern of incorrect diagnosis and drug reaction as well. Being future medical practitioners, self-medication has a special impact in medical students. Prevalence of self-medication was found to vary in medical students of different countries in earlier studies.³ On one hand, students become more and more cautious in practicing self-medication, knowing that irrational and inappropriate usage of them might be more harmful than useful, so they, even in situations of minor illnesses prefer taking any medication only after consultation from a qualified practitioner. On the other hand, they may become confident and, in most cases, overconfident, regarding their bookish knowledge and may start

implementing self-care. However, it is also recognized that self-medication must be accompanied by appropriate health information.⁴ 3rd professional medical students know about drugs while they studied pharmacology. There is a strong possibility of self-medication among 3rd professional medical students. It will be a risky procedure. This work has been designed to evaluate the extent of self-medication among 3rd professional medical students.

METHODS

An anonymous questionnaire-based study in all the medical students of 3rd year MBBS attending theory classes in the department of preventive and social medicine in Shaheed Nirmal Mahto medical college and hospital of India was conducted after getting permission from ethics committee of the college. Students of all ages and both sexes were included in the study. A brief description of the nature of the study and the procedure of completing the questionnaire was explained to students taking part in the study. Questionnaire was self developed and pre validated consisting of twelve closed ended questions. The survey was descriptive and data was summarised as counts and percentages. Microsoft word and excel programs were used for analysis of data. A questionnaire related to self-medication with consent was

prepared and distributed among the students of 3rd professional. Data was collected and analysed, the results expressed as counts and percentages.

Duration of study

The duration of the study was three months

Study period

The study period was from 1st January 2021 to 31st March 2021.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows that 35 students out of 100 have confidence regarding knowledge about medicines. 36 students have given the opinion that there is no requirement of doctor consultation for minor ailments. 46 students have given the opinion that we can save much time by self-medication.

Table 2 shows the various side effects due to self-medication.

Table 3 shows the different medicines used in self-medication.

Table 1: Reasons given by students in favour of self-medication.

Reasons	Number of students
Confidence regarding knowledge about medicines	35
Not compulsory to consult doctor for minor ailments	36
Saving of time	46

Table 2: Self-medication done by students for various ailments.

Ailments	Number of students
Headache	35
Cough and cold	25
Fever	40
Loose motion	38
Vomiting	22
Skin infection	35
Acidity	22

Table 3: Different medicines used for self-medication.

Medicines	Number of students
Tablet paracetamol	38
Capsule amoxycillin	34
Tablet metronidazole	35
Capsule omeprazole	37
Tablet domperidon	22
Neosporin ointment	35

DISCUSSION

In our study, we found that female students were more interested in taking self-medication as compared to male students. This may be due to the fact that the female students are more hesitant to go to the hospital or outpatient department for minor illness. Similar findings were there in the study done by Thadani.⁵ In our study most of the students have taken tablet paracetamol for headache. In our survey it is clear that paracetamol tablet is safest drug among all drugs which are taken by about 38 students as self-medication and it is confirmed by students itself. About 46 students out of 50 have given reason of saving of time in favour of self-medication. In our study it is clear that students have not taken any wrong medicines as self-medication. Self-medication is the utilization of medicines by persons on their own without any proficient medical supervision. In developing countries like India, most episodes are treated by self-medication due to easy availability of non-prescription drugs. It is more likely to be inappropriate without complete knowledge although it is becoming a routine practice nowadays especially by undergraduate medical students⁶. The prevalence of self-medication varied amongst different years of students and found increasing from first year to final year and the reason might be the knowledge of medicines in final year students which is comparable with the findings of previously conducted studies.⁷

CONCLUSION

This study showed that second professional medical students after studying pharmacological books they do not use any wrong medicine as self-medication done by 3rd professional medical students are more or less safer groups of drugs for very common ailments. High level of awareness of 3rd professional students has minimized self-medication. High level of awareness acquired by second professional students restrict the self-medication covering only few common ailments by very safe drugs. The study gives the message that scientific knowledge and awareness will minimize the self-medication which is supposed to be a risky and harmful practice.

Funding: No funding sources

Conflict of interest: None declared

Ethical approval: The study was approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee

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Cite this article as: Bhushan R, Chandra A, Verma RK. Study of self-drug administration among 3rd professional medical students. *Int J Community Med Public Health* 2021;8:3328-30.