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Study of self-drug administration among 2nd professional medical students

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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 2nd Professional medical students of RIMS, Ranchi, Jharkhand. **Material and Methods:** A questionnaire related to self-medication with consent was prepared and distributed among the students of 2nd 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 & headache followed by cough, cold & fever. Out of total 50 students most of the students took paracetamol tablet as self-medication. **Conclusion:** 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 2nd Professional students has minimized self-medication.

Keywords— Self-medication, Questionnaire, 2nd Professional.

1. 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 studies³. On one hand, students become more and more cautious in practising 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 information⁴. 2nd Professional medical students know about drugs while they studied Pharmacology. There is a strong possibility of self-medication among 2nd professional medical students. It will be a risky procedure. This work has been designed to evaluate the extent of self-medication among 2nd Prof. medical students.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

An anonymous questionnaire-based study in all the medical students of 2nd year MBBS attending theory classes in the department of Pharmacology in RIMS Ranchi, Jharkhand 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 2nd Professional. Data was collected and analysed the results expressed as counts and percentages.

Duration of study-Three months

Study Period-1st January to 31st March 2016

3. RESULTS

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

| Reasons | No. 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 | No. of students |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Headache | 35 |
| Cough & Cold | 25 |
| Fever | 40 |
| Loose motion | 38 |
| Vomiting | 22 |
| Skin infection | 35 |
| Acidity | 22 |

TABLE 3: Different medicines used for self-medication in our study.

| Medicines | No. of students |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| Tab.Paracetamol | 38 |
| Capsule Amoxycillin | 34 |
| Tablet Metronidazole | 35 |
| Capsule Omeprazole | 37 |
| Tablet Domperidon | 22 |
| Neosporin ointment | 35 |

4. 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 Thadani⁵. 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 studies⁷.

5. 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 2nd Professional medical students are more or less safer groups of drugs for very common ailments. High level of awareness of 2nd 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.

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Conflict of interest-None

Ethical approval- Approved by Institute Ethics Committee

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