An Evaluation On Perception, Knowledge And Practices About The Use Of Paracetamol Among The Parents In Treating Their Children In Penang

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INTRODUCTION

Paracetamol (PCM) is an easily accessible over-the-counter (OTC) medicine most widely used for analgesic or antipyretic (Chong et al., 2017). Paracetamol is reported to be the most common pharmaceutical agent involved in overdose particularly to the children at the age of below 6 years. There is a significant risk of paracetamol overdose in infants and children because of the varying dosing schedules and the variety of formulations with different strengths (Obu et al., 2012). Poor knowledge of parents and common self-medication practices among parents without proper consultation from health care providers increase the risk of misuse and overconsumption of paracetamol use among children (Almasdy & Sharrif, 2011).

METHODOLOGY

A cross-sectional survey involved quantitative structured interview was conducted among 93 parents in Penang, Malaysia from 1st August to 31st August 2019. A questionnaire consisting of 4 sections was used to conduct this study. The data collection tool in a questionnaire was developed based on a literature review. The data collection tools were pre-tested for content validity, face validity, as well as clarity of the questions and instructions by 3 experts in pharmacy practice research.

RESULT

Parents used PCM to treat their children

- No: 12.9%
- Yes: 87.1%

Formulation used by parents

- Syrup: 37.5%
- Chewable tablet: 38.5%
- Suppository: 39.5%
- Infants drops: 0%

Frequency of PCM

- 36.5 - 37°C: 25%
- 38.5 - 39°C: 50%
- 39.5 - 40°C: 25%

Temperature to start PCM on their children

- 36.5 - 37°C: 7.8%
- 38.5 - 39°C: 53.1%
- 39.5 - 40°C: 37.5%

Overall knowledge score

- 80-100%: 50%
- 60-79%: 40%
- 40-59%: 10%
- 20-39%: 0%

Effect of PCM over-consumption

- Liver damage: 75%
- Renal Damage: 50%
- Abdominal Pain: 25%
- I don't know: 0%

DISCUSSION

- The parents have lack of knowledge about the correct dose, frequency and total daily dosing on different PCM formulation.
- PCM overdoses and underdoses cases on children are common.
- The parents are unaware of the precautions and toxicities of PCM uses.
- Few of the parents will double the frequency or take PCM more frequently when fever persisted.
- Most of the parents receive medical advices from doctors and pharmacists.
- Hence, doctors and pharmacists play an important role to improve the knowledge and practice of PCM use among parents.

CONCLUSION

There is a need to enhance the knowledge and practices of parents on the appropriate use of PCM in treating their children.

REFERENCE