PP176

Knowledge, attitudes, and practices about first aid given for childhood injuries among mothers of preschool children in Ragama MOH area, Sri Lanka

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Introduction

Children under 5 are the most vulnerable group for unintentional injuries and mothers as the main prehospital caregivers it is vital to have first aid knowledge for common childhood injuries.

Objectives

To assess the existing knowledge about first aid given for unintentional injuries such as burns, cut injuries, poisoning, choking, drowning & fractures and their attitudes, and practices in providing first aid and to find associated factors with knowledge.

Methods

A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted in the Ragama MOH area, in 2022. 343 mothers were recruited from 12 preschools, using the cluster sampling method. A self-administered questionnaire was distributed, data were analysed using SPSS software and associations were analysed using the Chi-Square test, ($p<0.05$ -significant)

Results

Most of the mothers were young housewives and their knowledge was overall inadequate at first aid. (54.2%) The highest median score was obtained for questions on fractures 3.732 (SD ± 1.454) and the lowest for cut injury 2.752 (SD ± 1.2187). The majority (89.5%) knew the ambulance contact number. Only 47.2% of the mothers had given first aid in an emergency and out of them 67.9% had felt tense while doing so. Most had provided first aid for burn injuries (18.7%).

Conclusions

The majority of participants' knowledge of first aid was inadequate. Most of them had a positive attitude towards first aid and were willing to learn further. The factors associated with their knowledge were education level and their perception of their own knowledge. Most preferred a hands-on training program for knowledge acquisition.

Key words: *First aid, Pediatrics, Unintentional injuries*