

Original research article

Self-medication practice among MBBS students

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Abstract

In developing nations like India, a rising proportion of people are turning to drugs as a form of self-medication as a result of the simple availability of a wide variety of medications. In addition, health facilities in these countries are poor. This study was carried out with the purpose of determining the levels of knowledge, attitudes and practices around self-medication held by MBBS students.

Keywords: Self-medication, practices, MBBS, students, Kerala

Introduction

"Self-medication" refers to when a patient takes medication without first consulting a medical professional, either because the patient decided to do so on his own or because the patient was advised to do so by a pharmacist or other untrained individual ^[1]. There have been a variety of studies conducted on self-medication, and the findings of these studies have shown that it is a practice that is fairly common, particularly in communities that are economically deprived. Additionally, it has been reported that self-medication is an emerging topic on an international scale ^[2]. In developing nations like India, a rising proportion of people are turning to drugs as a form of self-medication as a result of the simple availability of a wide variety of medications. In addition, health facilities in these countries are poor. Self-medication done incorrectly leads to a waste of resources, a rise in resistance to pathogens, and in general includes major health concerns such as unpleasant drug responses, extended suffering, and dependence on drugs. It is now a widely held belief that patients, healthcare practitioners, the pharmaceutical industry and governments can all stand to benefit from people engaging in safe forms of self-medication as part of their self-care practices ^[3]. Comparisons should be made between the potential dangers and benefits of self-medication and the potential hazards and benefits of prescribed drugs. Self-medication is an area in which governments and health authorities need to ensure that it is done in a responsible manner. This includes ensuring that safe drugs are made available over the counter and that consumers are given sufficient information regarding the use of drugs and when they should consult a doctor ^[3-10]. The goal of maintaining a high level of health while reducing overall healthcare costs has brought increased focus on the responsible use of pharmaceuticals around the world. Despite this, there are very few studies done on students who self-medicate, which is why the current study was conducted. The goals of the study were to determine students' knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding self-medication, as well as to determine the reasons for and patterns of self-medication among MBBS students.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of the study was to determine students' knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding self-medication, as well as to determine the reasons for and patterns of self-medication among MBBS students.

Materials and Methods

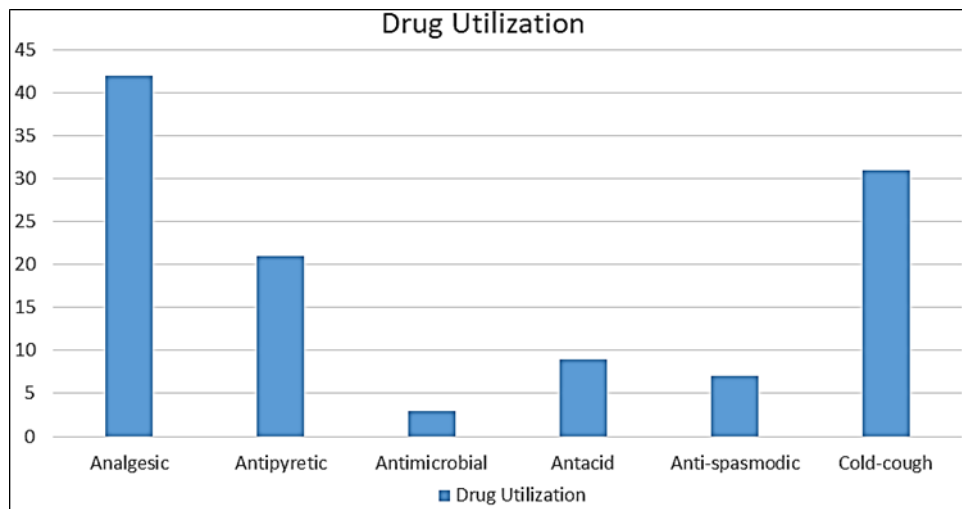
This research was carried out in the Kannur Medical College's Department of Pharmacology in the state of Kerala. This survey is completely confidential and is in the form of a questionnaire. Over the course of the research, a pattern of drug usage that occurred in the three months prior to the investigation was identified. It was decided to construct a questionnaire that had been devised and evaluated independently. The data was then reviewed using Microsoft Excel, and the results were presented in the form of counts and percentages.

Results

In our research, out of a total of 100 students, we found that the prevalence of students who had self-medicated within the previous six months was 61 percent. When the rate of self-medication was broken down by gender, it was found that out of a total of 42 females, 19 were taking self-medication and 39 were not taking self-medication.

Table 1: Drug Utilization pattern

Drugs	Frequency
Analgesic	42
Antipyretic	21
Antimicrobial	03
Antacid	09
Anti-spasmodic	07
Cold-cough	31



Graph 1

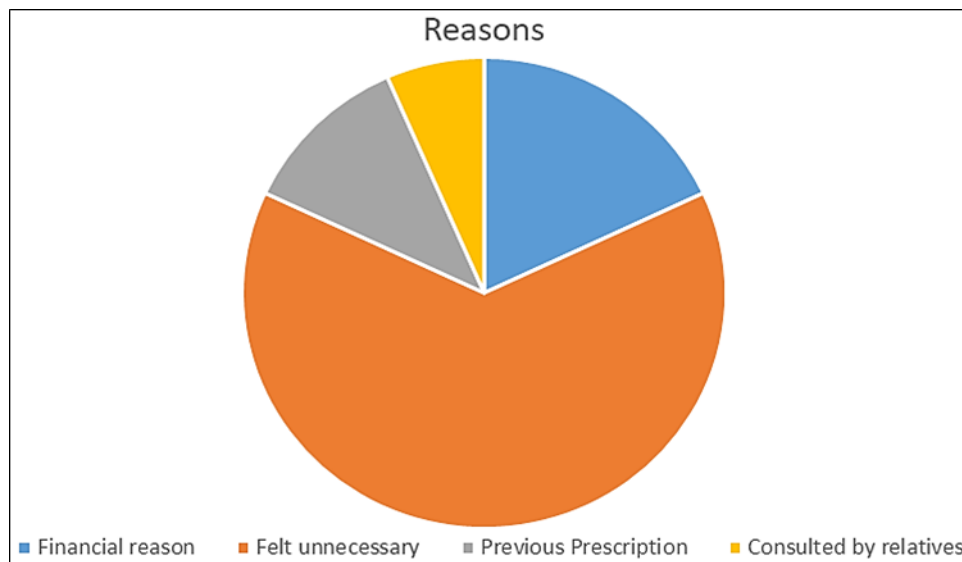


Table 2: Reasons

Discussion

In our research as written earlier, out of a total of 100 students, we found that the prevalence of students who had self-medicated within the previous six months was 61 percent. When the rate of self-medication was broken down by gender, it was found that out of a total of 42 females, 19 were taking self-medication and 39 were not taking self-medication. In other developing nations, the rate ranged from 12.7% to 95% [4, 5] whereas similar studies conducted among non-medical university students have found that the prevalence of self-medication ranges from 65% to 87% [6]. Know-how as well as mentality 32 out of 60 students (53.33%) had information regarding the bad effects, dose and drug interactions caused by the medicine, while 28 out of 60 students (46.67%) did not. The percentages are derived from the

percentage of students that took the drug. A study conducted on non-medical university students in Punjab found that the general population had a lower level of knowledge of these topics. For example, only 32% of people in the general population in Punjab knew the dose of the drugs, and only 23% knew about the side effects of the drugs. However, 43.4% of people knew about drug interactions, and 32.7% knew about drug profiles^[7]. The most common indication for self-medication and its source, according to our research. The majority of students, experienced fever as the primary symptom of the disease. This was followed by coughing or the common cold of the students, headaches, and body pain. The source was either books or the internet, personal recommendations from friends, advertisements and prescriptions from doctors. A comparable survey conducted on non-medical university students in the Malwa region found that doctors were the primary source of self-medication for 53.04 percent of the students, followed by 55.55% of the students. Illness of a less serious nature advice from prior physicians or prescription Parental restraints regarding time and money 26.8% and friends 9.5%.

Conclusion

The high prevalence of self-medication that I found in my research raises some serious concerns. According to the findings of earlier studies, analgesics and antipyretics make up the majority of the medications investigated. Inappropriate usage of antimicrobials will hasten the development of strains that are resistant to the treatment.

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