

Knowledge, attitude, practice and associated factors of fever management among mothers of children admitted to the paediatric wards of Teaching Hospital Jaffna

P. Thevanihedan¹, J.S. Sutharshana¹, S.F. Rinosha¹, S.K. Arulmoli², B. Kumarendran³

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna*

²*Teaching Hospital Jaffna*

³*Department of Community and Family Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna*

Background and objective: Empirical evidence suggests a lack of awareness on fever management in children among mothers in Jaffna. This study aimed to determine the knowledge, attitude, practice, and associated factors in relation to fever management among mothers of children admitted to the paediatric wards of Teaching Hospital Jaffna.

Material and methods: This descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 407 mothers selected using systematic sampling in the paediatric wards of Teaching Hospital Jaffna in October and November 2019. Data were collected using an interviewer-administered questionnaire. KAP was assessed by composite scoring. Data were entered using EpiData and analyzed in SPSS. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used in the analysis.

Results: In total, 407 mothers participated with a response rate of 95.31%. An important source of information on fever management was healthcare staff (62%, n=261). About a fifth (21%, n=86) of the participants were not aware that clothing must be reduced during fever. The majority had positive attitudes towards using home remedies in uncomplicated fever (84%, n=343) and confirming fever with a thermometer (78.7%, n=314). Negative attitudes were present among the majority towards increasing the dose (55.8%, n=227) and frequency (53.4%, n=217) of antipyretics. With respect to practices, 82% (n=332) confirmed fever using a thermometer, 49% (n=200) used cold water for tepid sponging (49%, n=200), 43% (n=176) laid the child with fever in the left lateral position, and 23% (n=93) gave metal to grasp. Knowledge was associated with age (p=0.01) and education (<0.001). Attitude was associated with education level (<0.001). Practice was associated with education level (<0.001) and parenting experience (p=0.006).

Conclusion: Majority of mothers of children <3 years at Teaching Hospital Jaffna practice tepid sponging and administer antipyretics at home, although knowledge and practice vary.

Keywords: Fever, Home-Based Management, Knowledge, Attitude, Practice