

PP 10 -Awareness of Symptoms of Chickenpox and its Management among Housewives in Ranala Area

Lakmini M.K.S.^{a#}, Senevirathne M.B.S.^b

^a*Sri Jayewardenepura General Hospital*

^b*Department of Pathology, Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura*

[#]*Corresponding author: sith87224@gmail.com*

Background: Sri Lankan epidemiological reports, demonstrate strong evidence of a high level of susceptibility for Varicella Zoster Virus (VZV) infection or chickenpox among the adult population in Sri Lanka.

Objectives: Specific objectives of the study were, to describe the awareness of the housewives in Ranala area on symptoms and transmission of chickenpox and practices with regard to management and prevention of chickenpox.

Methodology: This descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among randomly selected sample of 200 housewives in Ranala area, using an interviewer administered questionnaire.

Results and conclusion: Prevalence of chickenpox was 4% within two years in the area. More than 90% (n= 184) was aware about the symptoms of chickenpox irrespective of their education level or occupation. Almost all the participants (n=198) knew that chickenpox was a communicable disease and 46.5% knew that the causative organism is a virus. Nearly 80% knew that the mode of disease transmission is droplets and more than half of the participants over 35 years, avoided from unnecessary contact and avoided bathing until 7 days. Sleeping on Margosa leaves was the commonest traditional treatment practice known to participants (40.5%). Two third of participants refused providing a nutritional diet to the patient. Nearly 70% of participants knew about both pharmacological treatment and vaccine while 17% knew neither treatments nor vaccines. Majority of women knew that the vaccine for this is not available in the child welfare clinics (95%) or the school (99.5%) when 45.5% of women knew that the vaccine is available in the private hospitals. The elder women (>35 years) still follow traditional practices for curing and prevention of chickenpox than younger women (<35 years). Majority in the study population was aware of the symptoms and transmission of chickenpox, but the awareness with regard to treatment and the availability of the vaccine was less. Providing information about modern practices, treatment options and vaccines are some important means of reducing prevalence of chickenpox among public.

Keywords: Awareness, chickenpox, housewives, management, symptoms