

PP 34

Knowledge on side effects and toxicity of paracetamol among mothers attending to the well baby clinics in Colombo district

Indunil W¹, Ranuja S¹, Jayawardane P¹

¹*Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura*

Objective: Poor knowledge on paracetamol toxicity among mothers could lead to increased incidence of paracetamol induced liver damage in children. Thus the objective of this study was to assess the level of knowledge on side effects and toxicity of paracetamol among mothers attending the well baby clinics in Colombo district.

Methods: A descriptive cross sectional study was performed among mothers attending well baby clinics in Colombo district. The sample was selected using clustered sampling method in 17 MOH divisions of Colombo district. Data were collected using a pretested interviewer administered questionnaire. Data analysis was done by SPSS Software version 21.

Results: 403 mothers participated in the study. Only 59.4% of the participants knew that paracetamol can cause toxicity. Of that 98.8% were aware that administering high doses (higher than specified dose according to weight of the child) could contribute to toxicity and 91.7% were aware frequent administration of a specified dose (more than 4 times a day) of paracetamol may be harmful. Mothers under the age of 20 years and mothers who are unemployed have a significantly poor knowledge on paracetamol toxicity compared to other age groups and employed mothers respectively ($p>0.05$). 82.4% of the participants did not know that in appropriate use of paracetamol can cause liver toxicity.

Conclusion: The study results indicate that knowledge on toxicity of paracetamol is not highly satisfactory. Awareness programmes specially targeting the young and unemployed mothers are required to enhance the knowledge on paracetamol toxicity.