Awareness about chickenpox among parents and guardians of children attending pedodontic OPD: A survey

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.33545/pathol.2019.v2.i2d.112

Abstract

Aim: The aim was to create awareness of chickenpox among parents and guardians of children attending pedodontic OPD.

Objectives: To create awareness of etiology, signs & symptoms, treatment and prevention about chickenpox among parents and guardians of children attending pedodontic OPD.

Background: Chickenpox is a common childhood illness especially in kids under age 12. Caused by the varicella-zoster virus (VZV), chickenpox is very contagious. Kids who do get it might have an itchy rash of spots all over the body and flu-like symptoms. An infected child should stay home and rest until the rash is gone. Varicella vaccine is given when kids are between 12 and 15 months old, followed by a booster shot at 4 to 6 years of age

Reason: Chickenpox is a rapidly spreading contagious disease among children which spreads both through air and direct contact, hence it is essential to beware of it.

Methodology: Data was collected among 50 parents or guardians of children attending pedodontic OPD, using a questionnaire that contained 25 questions.

Conclusion: Chickenpox is a contagious disease recognized by a characteristic and often pathognomonic maculopapular vesicular rash. Varicella may lead to serious complications, including secondary bacterial skin and soft-tissue infections, cerebellitis, encephalitis, pneumonia, and coagulopathy. Neonates, adolescents, and immunocompromised individuals are more susceptible to complications. The study concludes that majority of the people have general knowledge about treatment, prevention and specific knowledge about the chickenpox disease.

Keywords: Awareness, chickenpox, pedodontic OPD

Introduction

Chickenpox or varicella is a contagious disease caused by varicella-zoster virus (VZV). VZV belongs to herpes virus family. The main constraint of this disease is it is an air borne disease spreads human to human by cough or sneeze [1]. Human are the primary host during early Infection. The main symptoms of this disease are fever, body aches, fatigue, skin rash, irritability etc [2]. The rash may spread to other internal parts of the body too in severe cases. Men are the main host for VZV. During the primary infection, VZV act on the upper respiratory tract and followed by reticuloendothelial system and finally caused viraemia, where both cell mediate immunity and humoral immunity fight against the virus [3]. The most common mode transmission VZV is believed to be person to person from infected respiratory tract secretions. Transmission may also occur by respiratory contact with airborne droplets or by direct contact or inhalation of aerosols from vesicular fluid of skin lesion of acute varicella zoster. There are various factors impact on human of this disease immunity, climate/environment, population density etc. In this condition various factors shows their impact on human. Pregnant women and children are prone to this disease. This study mainly focuses on creating awareness among parents regarding spread of chickenpox among children.

Materials and Methods

A cross sectional questionnaire to determine the knowledge about chickenpox among parents and guardians of patients was designed. Data were collected from 50 parents or guardians of patients of Saveetha dental college, Chennai. There are 25 direct questions regarding
chickenpox. In this study the percentage of awareness has to be noted based on their knowledge and the statistical analysis was performed to analyze the study.

**Results**

This study was done among the parents and guardians of children attending Pedodontics OPD in Saveetha Dental hospital. A questionnaire regarding chickenpox comprising of 25 questions were distributed to appropriately 50 people. Parents were asked to fill the questionnaire with consciousness. The data obtained from the questionnaire is depicted as follows for each question as pie chart.

**Chart 1:** Chicken pox is contagious

**Chart 2:** Chicken pox vaccine is available

**Chart 3:** When should the chicken pox vaccine be provided to children?

**Chart 4:** Once exposed to infection, a person can develop the infection as little as days

**Chart 5:** Chicken pox can spread through

**Chart 6:** If your child has chickenpox and you are unvaccinated. What are the chances of getting it?
Chart 7: Where will you probably find the rash first?

Chart 10: What can help to soothe the itchy rash?

Chart 8: Where are the spots likely to be most sore?

Chart 11: Can you get chickenpox from your child?

Chart 9: How will you treat chickenpox?

Chart 12: Which of these is a symptom of chickenpox?
Chart 13: Does chickenpox has longer in adults or children?

Chart 14: Is shingles related to chickenpox?

Chart 15: If you’ve had chickenpox, is it true that you don’t need to worry about contracting shingles later in life?

Chart 16: Small pox is related to chickenpox?

Chart 17: In what time of the year do most children get chickenpox?

Chart 18: Why is it called chickenpox?
Chart 19: Is it true that your no longer contagious when the chickenpox blisters scab over?

Chart 20: If your child has chickenpox, what kind of painkiller should you avoid giving him/her?

Chart 21: How many doses of chicken pox vaccine do you need to be immune?

Chart 22: Is it true that once you had chickenpox, you develop a life-long immunity

Chart 23: Chickenpox is caused by

Chart 24: Is it possible for pregnant mothers to transmit chickenpox to their babies?
Correctly answered for 90% is only around 4%. Majority know that a person can get infection, if there is no previous history of chickenpox. In chart 22, we can see that 90% of the participants are aware that the chickenpox gives lifelong immunity [6].

The charts 9 and 10 are considered on the treatment of the chickenpox. About 42% of the participants answered that there are only home remedies available as treatment for chickenpox, 34% are aware that antibiotics are available, 22% goes for medicated creams and 2% answered that the chickenpox is self-limited disease. If a patient with chickenpox, normally it is not advisable to go for analgesic treatment, especially Aspirin. This is known by 72% of the participants, which is shown in chart 20 [7].

About the clinical features the chart 7 and 8 show that majority (62%) know about the first site the occurrence of the lesion and many are not known about the exact site of spread of the lesions. The chart 12 also deals with symptoms, and that shows only around 44% of the participants know that the fever and rashes are the major clinical symptom of the chickenpox. Chart 13 show the awareness about the duration of the disease among children and adults. 56% of the sample population correctly answered that adults have longer duration of the disease, but 26% said that children have longer duration and 18% of participants highlighted that both the age group have same duration of the disease process [8].

Shingles, a localised area of vesicular lesions seen in chickenpox. The question about the shingles is corrected answered by 58% of the participants. This is shown in chart 14. 42% are not know what the shingles are. In chart 15 shows that 74% answered positively for chart 14 knows that the shingles are not a serious lesion if a person had already affected by chickenpox. 84% knows that the smallpox is different from chickenpox (Chart 16) and 74% knows that chickenpox is not as dangerous as smallpox (Chart 18).

The seasonal affection of chickenpox is shown in chart 17. Majority (68%) of the participants correctly answered that the chickenpox mostly occurs in summer season. The contagiousness of the chickenpox has been reduced when once scab is formed. This is known to 92% of the participants, which is shown in chart 19 [9].

According to the above descriptive values the majority of the participants are known about the symptom and signs, spread of the disease and preventive measures. But majority are not known about the treatment options available for chickenpox.

Conclusion

Chickenpox is a contagious disease recognized by a characteristic and often pathognomonic maculopapular vesicular rash. Varicella may lead to serious complications, including secondary bacterial skin and soft-tissue infections, cerebellitis, encephalitis, pneumonia, and coagulopathy. Neonates, adolescents, and immunocompromised individuals are more susceptible to complications. The study concludes that majority of the people have general knowledge about spread, prevention and specific knowledge about the chickenpox disease. But they lack the treatment

References


