



The Practice of Over-The-Counter (OTC) Drug Counseling by Community Pharmacists code 046

INTRODUCTION

OTC drug use in Saudi Arabia is reportedly high. Community pharmacists (CPs) provide counseling services for patients to select and optimize OTC drug use. However; such practice in terms the importance of counseling points and topics for OTC-related products were not studied locally. The aim of this study was to investigate the counseling practices of for OTC-related products among local CPs.

OBJECTIVES

Primary objective:

To examine the practice of community pharmacists in Riyadh on OTC counseling

Secondary objective:

What are the most counseled OTC drugs , and what are the most counseling topics with patients

Such as " cough/cold , analgesic , anti-inflammatory , antacids , vitamins and nutritional supplements ... " , and topics like " cost , side effects , Rx-OTC interactions ... "

METHODS

A cross-sectional study using a validated self-administered face-to-face questionnaire was carried out among CPs in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

RESULTS

A total of 307 community pharmacists responded to the survey (response rate of 85. 2%). OTC drugs sales by CPs range between of 11-25% per day while OTC drugs recommended by CPs was more than 10 drugs per day. When CPs were asked to rate counseling points based on its importance when discussing OTC – related products with patients, about two-third (61.6%) of CPs reported that selecting the right product as “very important”, while only 11.7%, 11.4%, and 9.8% rated adverse effects, drug interaction, and cost as “very important” respectively. With regards to the counseling topics when discussing OTC – related products with patients, the most important topics were cough/cold (84%,) analgesics/ inflammatory (78.5%) herbal/diet supplements (65.8%), dermatological (43%) and contraception/ women’s health (29.6%).

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The present study highlights the high request for OTC drugs recommendation and selection that is performed by CPs in Saudi Arabia daily. This high request is confronted by deficiencies in OTC counselling particularly in drug interactions and side effects

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