

Maternal Knowledge and Practices Related to Usage of Oral Suspensions for Common Childhood Illnesses in a Semi Urban Area, Colombo District, Sri Lanka

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Out of oral suspensions, Antibiotics and Paracetamol are widely used medications among children. As a primary care giver, mothers are intimately involved in the delivery of medications to their children at home. However, they face many challenges even though they seek to administer medications to their children in a safe and effective manner.

To evaluate the maternal knowledge and practices related to usage of oral suspension to manage common illnesses in childhood who attended MOH clinics in Boralessgamuwa and Dehiwela area. A community based descriptive cross-sectional survey was carried out among mothers who were attending MOH clinics in Boralassgamuwa and Dehiwela between December 2017 and April 2018. A sample of 401 mothers was selected for the study using random sampling method. A pretested questionnaire was administered to gather data. Data were analyzed for descriptive and analytical statistics.

Out of 401 mothers, 21.7% (n=87) used good practices (90%-100% of score) and 8.5% (n=34) had good knowledge(65%-100% of score) related to oral suspensions. Though the maternal age did not show a significant association with knowledge ($p=0.792$) and practice ($p=0.064$), maternal educational level showed a significant association with knowledge ($p=0.000$) and practice ($p=0.000$). Out of total group of mothers 69.8% used correct practice during reconstitution. Only 3.5% had known the strength of paracetamol suspension while only 14% knew antibiotics are used for bacterial infections.

Majority of mothers had poor knowledge and fair practices regarding usage of oral suspensions for common childhood illnesses. Mothers' knowledge regarding interpretation of frequency of antibiotic usage and time of expiry of paracetamol liquid preparation are inadequate. Their knowledge about suspensions should be improved to practice with better understanding.

Key words: *Knowledge, Maternal, Oral suspensions, Practice*