



Research Article

DENTAL PHARMACOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE AMONG IRAQI MOTHERS AND ITS IMPACT ON THEIR CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

During our work in dental clinic we recorded an issue which is very public and serious at the same time. The ignorance of mothers in the field of dental knowledge lead to massive problems in childhood that ends in loosing even permanent teeth not only primary early. In addition to irrational drug use for children instead of seeking dental care. Patients and method - 63 women agreed to fill the questionnaire and accepted the follow up. Questionnaire was prepared to fulfil the dental and pharmacological fields of the study. Data were collected, analyzed and discussed. Results - Iraqi women were ignored completely because of war and the situation after fall of Baghdad 2003. Before that time informed organized programs were held to increase level of knowledge of people concerning general and dental health besides awareness and legislations concerning drugs selling in pharmacies. Nowadays these are all passed over and high percentage of women are ruled by families' law, this affects the level of rising up children in turn since many of the lose their chance to complete education.

Keywords: Iraqi mothers, dental health, irrational drugs administration.

INTRODUCTION

In pediatric dentistry Parents and family members are the main source for knowledge about child education and health habits, which definitely has a long-term impact in defining a child's oral health status. Parental decisions are predisposed by their attitudes which reflect on the oral health of the child¹. Chief complaint that drive parents to seek dental care for their children is pain and swelling that cause discomfort to the child, leading to inability to chew or speak well or even may affect the appearance of a child². Parental oral health-related awareness, belief, and attitudes have an influence over their children³. High caries prevalence is noticed among children live in low socio-economic level families⁴.

In developing countries there is a misuse of antibiotics, and many studies showed that they are used in pediatric to treat upper respiratory tract infection (even the cause is viral for many of these cases, ear infections, toothache whatever the cause is⁵⁻⁹). This issue now is currently one of the major public health concerns worldwide^{10,11}. As a result, antibiotic resistance is a progressively major hazard to global public health, and it is the most serious consequence^{12,13}.

Lack of awareness is another problem in Iraq this is may be due to barriers that include child demographic factors and family factors¹⁴⁻¹⁹. Other factors include challenging priorities in life and these were related to general situation in the country, the inconvenient locations of clinics, wasted opportunities, unavailability, lack of education and fear²⁰.

In this study light will be shed on the effect of Iraqi mother attitude and level of knowledge, education and aware about drugs and its impact on their children general, oral and dental health

besides how much this attitude positively changed after several programmed visits to a private clinic.

PATIENTS AND METHODS

63 Iraqi women who attended seeking dental care for their children were involved in this study who agreed to join the program of periodic visits. Approval from the Institutional Ethics Committee and necessary permissions from the clinic was taken prior to the study. Every participating mother was informed that the questionnaire will be involved I the study without private personal informations (names or address).

Their first visit included filling of a questionnaire (Table 1) which was short, simple, convenient for them, the diagnosis followed and explaining treatment plan. During visits they were informed how it is important to know the difference between primary and permanent dentition, or it is risky to use drugs without consultations, why it is important for them to visit dentist periodically.

Data were collected for each question separately and analyzed. And it gave us a picture how much the general situation in Iraq after 2003 affected healthcare programs and this produced many serious issued that should be taken in concern. The study was conducted as per GCP and volunteer consent was taken.

RESULTS

Distribution of study group according to age can be summarized in Table 2.

Question no. 3 revealed 43 (68.2%) mothers came to clinic derived by pain while 20 (31.8%) complained from swelling.

Question no. 4 showed confirmation from all mothers that they all tried medication with no positive results before seeking dental

intervention. 27 (42.8%) of them tried both antibiotic with analgesic, 14 (22.2%) tried antibiotic only and 12 (19%) tried only analgesics to relief pain.

Data collected for 5th question confirmed that there is no regular visit to dental clinic until it is necessary.

All 63 participants didn't hear about antibiotic resistance and that what explains why they all re- use the same antibiotics every time as it is clear in questions 6 and 7.

Question no. 8 shows that 49 (77.7 %) mothers didn't know that it is permanent while the rest (22.2%) confirmed that they do have previous knowledge about it.

Concerning importance of primary teeth, 51 (80.9%) confirmed that there is no importance and that what made them ask about

extraction instead of keeping those teeth, while 12 (19.1%) insisted on keeping primary dentition as much as possible.

Both questions 10 and 11 showed 100% of answers that they all either prescribed drugs by pharmacist and/ or by advice of family member when they get sick and do not ask doctors' help unless it is urgent. Also, regular visits to dentists is not done unless it is urgent.

Last question was answered with yes by 41 (65.1%) they do have bad previous experience with dentists while 22 (34.9%) confirmed that it is their first visit.

Table 1: Questionnaire filled at 1st visit

| Question | Answer | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. How old are you? | Detailed in table (2) | |
| 2. Do you have a job? | 37 answered (no) | 26 answered (yes) |
| 3. Main reason you visited the clinic today. | 43 attended because of pain only | 20 attended because of swelling |
| 4. Did you start treatment before this visit? | All 63 answered with (yes) 27 gave antibiotic + analgesic 14 gave antibiotic only 12 gave analgesic only | |
| 5. How often do you visit dentist? | All answered with (no) Until there is a need | |
| 6. what do you know about antibiotic resistance? | None of them have any knowledge about this | |
| 7. do you use the same antibiotic every time? | All confirmed with (yes) since it is safe, available and cheap | |
| 8. What do you know about 1st permanent molars? | 49 mother didn't know it is permanent | 14 mothers know it is permanent |
| 9. What is the importance of primary teeth ? | 51 mother don't think they are important | 12 mother think they are important and should be kept |
| 10. Who prescribes drugs to you and your family? | All confirmed it is either by family or pharmacist | |
| 11. What prevents you from regular dental visits? | All confirmed that cost, time, lifestyle and no regular visits until it is urgent | |
| 12. Any previous visits to dentist with problems? | 41 complained form poor communication of dentists | 22 confirmed it is their first visit |

Table 2: Age distribution among study group

| Age group | 15-19 year | 20-24 year | 25-29 year | 30-34 year | 35-40 year | Total |
|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------|
| Number | 4 | 17 | 23 | 16 | 3 | 63 |

DISCUSSION

Data collected from 12 questions opens discussion in the following important notes:

In Iraq, females from 15-20 years are pushed to be mothers by several reasons (local circumstances, financial, since more than half of the participants do not have a job, impact of war and terrorism.etc) usually these females are not prepared well to rise up children, and as a consequent this will affect the child's overall status. Many of them do not have the basic informations about health care measures, or prevention, since all of them derived by a serious cause to attend dental clinic and not for routine checkup.

All of the participants tried medications whether antibiotic or analgesic or both before they seek dental intervention for their children, this is a multifactorial issue.

First, an uncontrolled market in Iraq with absence of legislations related to monitoring and prescribing drugs and who are the allowed ones for prescribing, actually 90% of antibiotics, analgesics, anti- inflammatory drugs ...etc. are either sold OTC or prescriptions are re- used again between patients.

Second absence of awareness programs that are necessary to families to make them aware about drug irrational use and their consequences besides importance of routine dental visits specially for children.

Absence of knowledge concerning children's dental health, timing of dentition etc. makes it difficult to control children's dental health and this have an impact since many cases arrived at clinic ends with pulpotomy or extraction even of permanent teeth too early.

Recommendations

Ministry of health with the help of concerned syndicates should take true steps in:

1. Educating people in the field of general and dental health specially mothers.
2. Programs through all media about risk of irrational drug administration.
3. Legislations and strict rules should be applied on drug marketing in Iraq and offices that are opened without restriction to sell thousands of brands.
4. Same restrictions should be applied for pharmacies, who should actually sell and who should actually prescribe drugs.

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