

DENTISTS' KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES TOWARD PATIENTS WITH EPILEPSY IN CHENNAI CITY - A Questionnaire Survey

Type of Article: Knowledge, attitude and practice survey.

Running title: Epilepsy patients

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Abstract

Aim: The aim of this study was to assess dentists' knowledge about handling epilepsy patients on the dental chair

Material and Methods:

A cross-sectional study was conducted in December 2016 using a self-structured questionnaire to collect information from Dentists in Chennai

Results: Knowledge, attitude and practice of Dentists is quite common among the Dentists in Chennai.

Conclusion: Based on the results of this survey, authors concluded that a large number of dentists were confident to treat a person with epilepsy and they assumed they have responsibility to treat this population. None of the practice-related questions showed any significant difference in relation to different ages, gender.

Keywords: epilepsy, anti-convulsants, dentists

Introduction

Epilepsy is a disorder of the brain that is characterized generates seizures. The worldwide prevalence is found to be four to ten per thousand population. The prevalence of epilepsy is more in developing. Rate of epilepsy in India is 5.59 per 1000 population with no statistical difference between men and women or urban and rural population.

Epilepsy is considered as a social as well and psychological stigma in all countries. People with epilepsy are still socially put down by negative attitude of the public and defensive behavior. The negative attitude of the public have an effect on education, marriage, employment and other social activities.. Gingival enlargement caused due to anticonvulsant drugs is a common condition among people with epilepsy and in severe cases interferes with mastication requiring dental care. With this background, this study has been designed to assess the knowledge, attitudes and practices about epilepsy among a group of dentists in Chennai, India.

Aim

Aim: The aim of this study was to assess dentists' knowledge about handling epilepsy patients on the dental chair

Objectives

To gather the knowledge and attitude of dentists' knowledge about handling epilepsy patients on the dental chair

Material and methods

A. Study design:

- i. Place of study- Chennai.
- ii. Source of Data- Private Dentists in Chennai.
- iii. Sample Description- Private Dentists in Chennai
- iv. Selection Criteria-

1. Inclusion Criteria:

- Dentists having private practices in Chennai
- Qualification BDS/MDS

2. Exclusion Criteria:

- Students who are unwilling to participate in the study.
- Trainees

B. Material/Equipment for the study:

- A self-made questionnaire

C. Methodology:

This will be a cross-sectional questionnaire study. A set of 15 questions was given to private dentists in Chennai. The Dentists were assessed on the basis of their knowledge (9 questions) about vaccines (2 questions) available for Epilepsy the precautionary measures they will take for such patients (4 questions).

Question	Response	No of respondents
Epilepsy occurs in	One in every 1000 people	106 (48.8)
	One in every 100 people	27 (12.4)
	One in every 10,000 people	64 (29.5)
	One in every 50,000 people	16 (7.4)
	One in every 1,000,000 people	4 (1.9)
Causes of epilepsy	Accidents	42 (19.4)
	Inherited disease	35 (16.1)
	Insanity or mental illnesses	34 (15.7)
	Brain tumors	45 (20.8)
	Birth defects	39 (17.9)
	Stroke	16 (7.4)
	All of the above can cause epilepsy	118 (54.3)
An epileptic attack is	Don't know	13 (5.9)
	A convulsion or shaking	99 (45.6)
	A loss of consciousness	25 (11.5)
	An episode of behavioral change	25 (11.5)
	A period of memory disturbance	9 (4.2)
	Any of the above	108 (49.8)
Drug therapy for epilepsy	Don't know	0 (0.0)
	It is seldom effective in controlling seizures	84 (38.7)
	It is best given as two or more drugs that work	82 (37.8)
	It has advanced significantly over the past 10 years	88 (40.6)
	It occasionally produces malformations in babies	29 (13.7)
	It can be stopped abruptly after seizures are	9 (4.1)
	All of the above	29 (13.4)
In case of epileptic seizures in the dental	Don't know	32 (14.7)
	Put something in the patient's mouth to prevent with his/her tongue	157 (72.3)
	Hold the patient tight so the patient stops shaking	44 (20.3)
	Put the patient in the Trendelenburg position	48 (22.1)
	Administer oxygen	43 (19.9)
	Call medical help immediately	31 (14.3)
	Time it, and if it exceeds 3 min, call medical help	51 (23.5)
	Move the patient to an area where he/she cannot while having the seizure	116 (53.5)
Would you object to having any of your	Yes	34 (15.7)

children associate with persons who had sometimes epileptic seizures in school or in a playground

Would you object to a person with epilepsy marrying a close relative of yours (brothers, sister or child)?

No 183 (84.3)

Yes 84 (38.7)

No 133 (61.3)

Do you think persons with epilepsy should have children? Yes 188 (86.6)

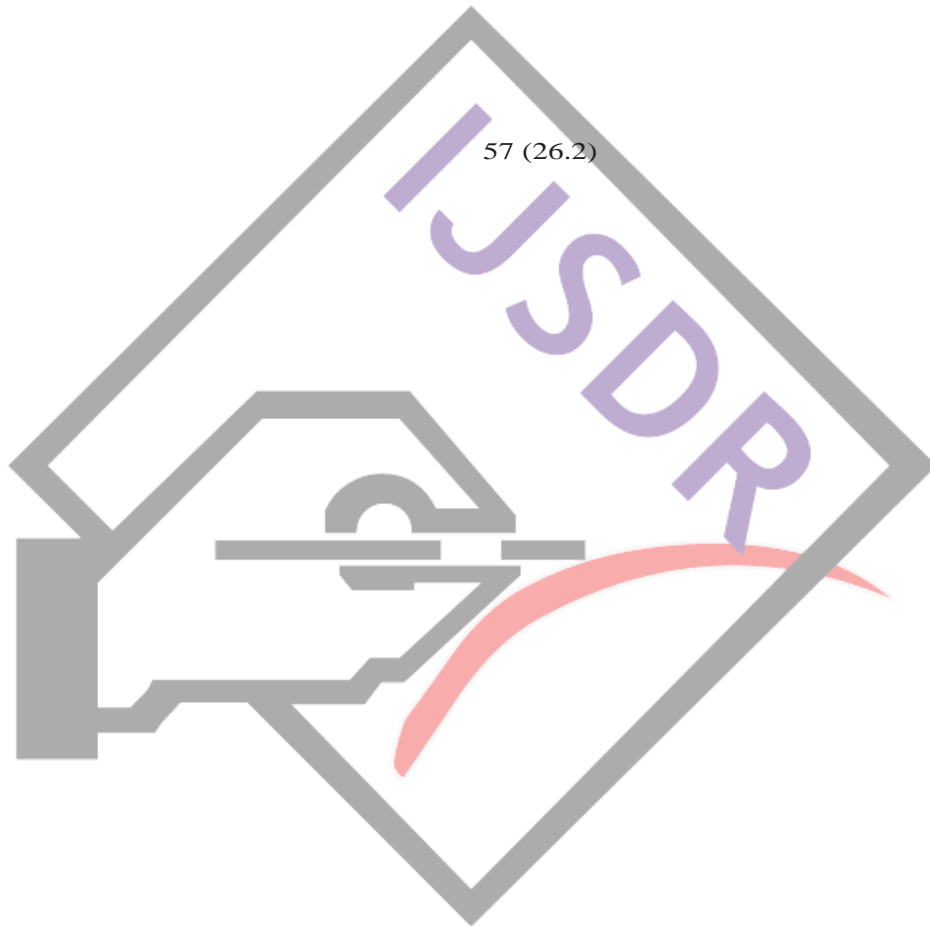
No 29 (13.4)

Do you think that in general, persons with epilepsy should be employed at the same jobs as other people?

Have you treated patients with epilepsy? Yes 61 (28.1)

Yes 160 (73.7)

No 57 (26.2)



Discussion

Knowledge, Attitude and Practice of post graduates is the majority of the respondents correctly identified the causes of epilepsy but a small percentage of them still connected it to mental illness/sanity. This could be connected to the fact that dentists are less exposed to patients with epilepsy and/or mostly recommend a medical opinion from medical doctors before proceeding with the treatment.

Conclusion

The current study will help us in understanding the knowledge, attitude and practice about epileptic patients among dentist in Chennai. In case of epileptic seizures, it has been recommended to time the seizures, and if it exceeds 3 min, call medical help and move the patient to a hospital. Social acceptance of patients with epilepsy was relatively high in this group of dentists. Around 82% of this population would not object to their children being closely associated with an epileptic patient. It is therefore concluded that the knowledge about epilepsy is widespread whereas, viewing it as a social stigma should be overcome by the dentists and public alike.

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