



## **Self-medication pattern among professional students in malnad region of Shimoga district: An concern**

**Chindala Laxman Reddy\*, I.J.Kuppast, T.Veerashekar, N.S.S.A.Valli Kanagarla**

Department of Pharmacology, National College of Pharmacy, Balaraj-Urs Road, Shimoga, Karnataka-577201, (INDIA)

E-mail : chindalalaxmanreddy@gmail.com

### **ABSTRACT**

The objective of this study was to describe and examine the branded medicines used by professional students, awareness, and trust in medicine system reasons behind self-medication, drug information resources danger findings and knowledge of drug profile. A total of 150 students belonging to malnad region of Shimoga district were recruited randomly from two different institutions, Shimoga Institution of Medical Science and National College of Pharmacy. An inclusion criterion was 17 years and above. A total of 22 students were excluded in accordance with the exclusion criteria like in complete information. The prevalence of self-medication among professional students was 84%. About 81.97% students have a positive trust in allopathic medicines, 81.82% students learnt self-medication from doctors prescriptions provided during their prior illness. 16.65% were smokers, 12.74% students with chronic problems, who were considered in danger findings. For about 44.93% students knew drug interaction. Most of the self-medication was for condition like headache, fever, cough, cold, gastrointestinal infection, mouth ulcer and throat infection. The results were based on feed backs which were provided by respondents included in the study. The percentage of self-medication may change with locality and region. The prevalence of self-medication among professional students in Shimoga district was high. This descriptive survey shows that the majority of professional students have a poor knowledge about appropriate self-medication and the knowledge of benefits and risks was also not adequate. This issue needs to be addressed by the responsible authorities. © 2013 Trade Science Inc. - INDIA

### **INTRODUCTION**

Self-medication is defined as the use of medication, whether modern or traditional, for self-treatment. Studies done on self-medication reveal that it is a fairly common practice, especially in economically deprived communities. It is a growing trend of self-care which has its positive and negative aspects.

### **AIM AND OBJECTIVE**

The present study was undertaken to evaluate the frequency of (i) branded medicines used by professional students, (ii) awareness, (iii) trust in medicinal system,

(iv) reasons behind self-medication.

### **METHODOLOGY**

This study was carried out with help of a questionnaire-based survey. A self-developed, prevalidated questionnaire was prepared. The study population comprised college students of the malnad region of Karnataka. A briefing was given about the nature of study, and the procedure of completing the questionnaire was explained. Consulting participants completed the questionnaire in the college campus. A total of 150 students were recruited randomly from two different institutions of malnad region. The inclusion

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criteria for the selection of students was 17 years and above. For about 22 students were excluded in accordance with the exclusion criteria like incomplete information. The questionnaire consisted of questions on type of medicine system, category of medicines and name of a particular medicine. The results were based upon the data obtained from 128 (100%) students. The prevalence of self-medication was reported as percentages. The survey was descriptive and data was summarized as counts and percentages, some of the questions had multiple options to choose from, therefore the sum total of percentage is not always 100%.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Most of the students have a trust in allopathic medicine system (70.08%) and the percentage of students favouring homeopathy and ayurveda were 20.77% and 10.68% respectively. The prevalence of self-medication among professional students was 87%. Coming to reasons of the self-medication most of the population (58%) agreed that there was no need of doctors visits in case of minor illness like cold, cough,

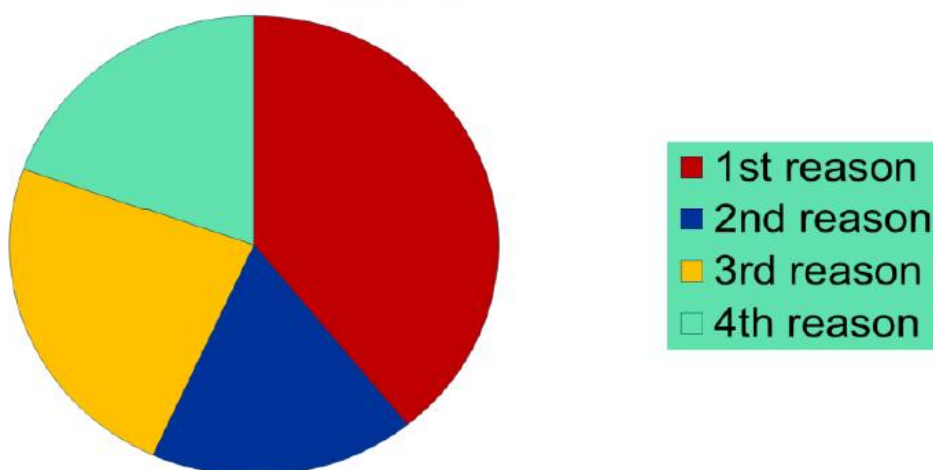
fever, itching etc. 26% respondents said that they prefer self-medication because of lack of time to visit doctors and 35% said that they are not capable of paying fees to doctors. Students learnt self-medication from doctors prescriptions provided during their prior illness. Only 44.93% students knew drug interaction. Most of the self-medications were antipyretics, analgesics, antihistamines, antibiotics and for ulcer. The results were based on feed backs which were provided by respondents included in the study.

The study was based on a self-administered questionnaire was largely dependent upon information given by respondents. Few students consulted pharmacists for information on drugs. The pharmacist's role is mainly seen as that of a drug salesman rather than that of a healthcare provider. Patient education and awareness campaigns are necessary to promote the role of the pharmacist in India. Students with a previous experience and with mild illness were more likely to practice self-medication. This has implications, because many diseases have similar symptoms and a person using previous experience may be exposed to the dangers of mis-diagnosis and consequently wrong treatment.

**TABLE 1 : Showing the results of survey:**

Sl. No	Percentage	Reasons
1	58%	Agreed that there was no need of doctors visit in case of minor illness like cold, fever, itching etc.
2	26%	Respondents said that they prefer self-medication because of lack of time to visit doctors.
3	35%	Said that they are not capable of paying fees to doctors.
4	28.93%	They knew about drug interactions.

**Percentage of self medication among professional students**



**Figure 1 : Showing percentage of self-medication among professional students**

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## *Short Communication*

In the study out of 128 respondents not a single respondent had knowledge about complete profile of the drug which was taken up by self-medication practice. They were not even aware of the dose of drug, duration of therapy, toxic dose of drug, active constituents, indications and side effects of commonly used medicine like Paracetamol used in self-medication. Major reasons of self-medication at student level were time saving, did not need advice from prescriber for minor illness, economic, fear from crowd at clinic. Most of the respondent has positive attitude in self-medication in minor illness.

### **CONCLUSION**

The prevalence of self-medication among professional students in Shimoga district is high. This descriptive survey shows that the majority of professional students had a poor knowledge about appropriate self-

medication while the knowledge of the benefits and risks was not adequate. Thus, to avoid or minimize the dangers of self-medication: Firstly the students should be educated about the dangers of indiscriminate use of drugs. Secondly, the physician should be more judicious in prescribing, and must insist on drugs being supplied by the chemist only on a valid prescription. Thirdly, a proper statutory drug control must be implemented, rationally restricting the availability of drugs to the public.

### **REFERENCES**

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