

Factors That Influence on the Development of Constipation Among the Patients Admitted to Female Medical Wards and Staying for Three or More Days at the Teaching Hospital, Jaffna

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Constipation is one of the common complaints among the general population. The risk of developing constipation, during hospital stay, is common and it usually left unrecognized. Awareness regarding new onset of constipation during the hospital stay and knowledge about the possible causes will help the health personal in their patients' care. The objective is to identify the factors influence on the development of constipation among the female patients admitted to medical wards and staying for three or more days in Teaching Hospital, Jaffna. This was a hospital based descriptive cohort study among female patients in medical wards. Study population was 372 and studied for one month. Study instruments were Constipation Assessment Scale, 24 hour intake output chart and an interviewer administered questionnaire. Data were analyzed as mean, rate and percentages. Pearson's Chi square analysis was used to determine the statistical significance of the factors influencing on the onset of constipation. This research study identified that 38.2% of the patients in the study population have developed constipation on the day three. Following factors were identified as statistically significant preventable causes of change in bowel habits of medically admitted female patients during hospital stay: increasing age ($p=0.004$), reducing educational qualification ($P=0.004$), Impaired mobility status ($p=0.001$), inadequate fiber intake ($p=0.00$), negative fluid balance ($p=0.00$), feeling difficult to use hospital toilets ($p=0.00$), sleep disturbance ($p=0.004$), antihypertensives ($p=0.04$), iron supplement ($p=0.03$), corticosteroids ($p=0.03$) and antihistamins ($p=0.01$). Some medications were not found to have impact on bowel habits such as: Non opioid analgesics ($p=0.27$), antibiotics ($p=0.14$), betablockers ($p=0.43$), hypoglycemic agents ($p=0.93$), anticoagulants ($p=0.54$), antiplatelets ($p=0.07$), antiemetics ($p=0.07$), H2 receptor antagonist ($p=0.06$) and proton pump inhibitors ($p=0.16$). This study reveals that a number of preventable factors are influencing on the bowel habits of patient during hospital stay which needed to be recognized and attended.

Keywords: Constipation, Hospital stay