

Theme 1: Students and Wellbeing

OP3

Prevalence, pattern, and influence of socio-demographic and psychosocial factors on self-medication among medical students of Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna

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Introduction and Objectives: Self-medication is the use of medicines by individuals to treat self-recognized illnesses or symptoms without any medical supervision. Such practices may cause serious problems. However, empirical evidence is limited to the current status of its practices and associated factors among medical students. The aim of this study was to determine the prevalence, pattern, and influence of sociodemographic and psychosocial factors on self-medication among medical students of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna.

Methods: In this descriptive cross-sectional study, 636 medical students participated from the University of Jaffna. A self-administered questionnaire was used, which was developed by the researchers and pretested with a pilot study done with the students of the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, University of Jaffna. Data was analyzed, processed, and saved with the help of Statistical Package for Social sciences (SPSS Version 25). A Chi-square test was used to determine the association of sociodemographic and psychosocial factors on self-medication among medical students.

Results: Self-medication practice was found to be 65.9% among medical students from the University of Jaffna. Analgesics (60.9%), Antipyretics (47.1%), Supplements-vitamins and minerals (27.9%), Antacids (28.9) and Antibiotics (30.3%) were the most common self-medicated drugs. Of the respondents, 64.4% have taken drugs from pharmacy shops, 29.6% have got drugs from leftover drugs of friends and family. The majority (58.2%) of students have acquired information about dosage from the previous prescription. Academic stress ($p < 0.001$) and relationship stress ($p < 0.001$) were significantly associated with self-medication practice.

Conclusion: The prevalence of self-medication among medical students was considerable. The use of self-medication was significantly associated with academic stress and relationship issues. Therefore, potential problems of self-medication should be emphasized to the students, and further identification of factors associated with unhealthy self-medication practices should be addressed.

Keywords: Self-medication, Medical undergraduates, Socio-demographic factors, Psychosocial factors