



PAPER COMPETITIONS

Self-Medication Practices for the Prevention and Treatment of COVID-19 among Undergraduate Medical Students

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Introduction

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, health care workers are still at an increased risk for infection. Medical students attending classes in person and interacting with probable infective patients may have led to an increase in preventive measures such as self-medication. This study was conducted to:

- assess knowledge and practices towards self-medication in regard to the COVID-19 pandemic in undergraduate medical students
- assess protective measures followed for prevention of the spread of COVID-19 in medical students in a tertiary care hospital in South India.

Methods

An online survey-based cross-sectional study was conducted in the undergraduate medical student population of a tertiary care hospital in South India. Data from students from 1st year to Internship of the medical college was collected through Google Forms. Statistical Analysis was done using Google Sheets.

Results

Out of 326 students (209 female, 117 male). 29.8% stated that they had self-medicated for prevention or treatment of COVID-19, the most common drugs being taken were 'over the counter' supplementary medicines such as Vitamin C and Zinc tablets. 21.3% of individuals being treated for COVID-19 admitted to self-medicating, the commonest reason for self-medicating being easy access to medication.

Conclusion

Although medical students have the knowledge and are aware of the risks associated with Self Medication, the practice is prevalent for the prevention and treatment of COVID-19. Based on the results, it can be noted that apart from self-medication, many measures are being implemented to prevent infection.

Keywords

Self-medication, COVID-19, medical students