

Knowledge and self-foot care practices among diabetic patients, attending the General Hospital, Mannar, Sri Lanka

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Diabetes mellitus (DM) is a chronic progressive metabolic disorder due to lack of insulin or insulin resistance. DM is associated with significant morbidity including foot pathologies such as neuropathy, ulceration and infection. Diabetic foot ulcers (DFU) is preventable but considered the leading cause of lower extremity amputation. Therefore, prevention of lower extremity amputation (LEA) through adequate knowledge and proper self-foot care practices is very essential. The aim of the present study was to assess the knowledge and self-foot care practices among DM patients. This study was an interviewer-administered questionnaire survey which was done among a group of patients attended the diabetic clinic, District Hospital, Mannar. In the present study majority of the patients were females and in the age group of between 60-70 years. Majority of the patients (79.6%) had no adequate educational level while 65.2% of the patients had poor monthly income. Regarding the knowledge on DM and DFU 29.6% and 21.6% of the patients had not known about these conditions, respectively. Majority of the patients (96.8%) had not known about the relationship between DM and DFU. Out of 250 patients only 5 patients (02%) had checked their feet regularly. In addition 77.2% of the patients did not dry their feet after washing whereas 64.8% of the patients did not check their footwear before wearing. Most of the patients (58.8%) had not received health education regarding DM, DFU and self-foot care practice methods. This study sample constituted patients living in rural areas of Mannar. This accounts for the low level of education and income in our study population. Our results are consistent with the other published literature which shows that diabetes patients have a lack of knowledge on the relationship between DM and DFU as well as foot care practices. Our study is the first study which assesses the knowledge and self-foot care practices among diabetes patients, however further studies are necessary to validate these data and for the implementation of programmes to educate the patients regarding DM, DFU and other related pathologies.