

## **Study on patients' awareness of ischaemic heart disease**

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Ischaemic heart disease (IHD) is one of the biggest health burdens in the Sri Lankan population. However, it is a treatable and preventable disease. Achievements of treatment goals are determined through the pharmacological and non-pharmacological management. Patient commitment is important to fulfill the above management strategies. For that, patients' knowledge regarding disease, therapy and lifestyle changes are essential. Therefore, this study was conducted to evaluate patients' knowledge regarding the above aspects, and to find out how a brief education intervention affects patients' awareness of IHD and pharmacotherapy.

Clinically diagnosed IHD patients were randomly divided into three groups and their baseline knowledge on IHD was assessed using a researcher administered questionnaire. Group 1 was treated as the control, and information leaflets were given to groups 2 and 3. Moreover, group 3 had undergone verbal instructions to explain the content of the leaflet. At the end of one month, all the patients' were assessed using the same questionnaire.

Patient's knowledge and awareness with respect to common risk factors of IHD improved in group 2 (22%) and group 3 (42%), after the intervention. No significant improvement in the control group was seen. There was a remarkable rise in the overall awareness regarding their illness after the intervention. In addition, a considerable increase (>10%) in percentage of patients knowing correct drug doses, frequency and names of their routine drugs were noted. Awareness of the use of Glyceryl Trinitrate (GTN) tablets increased markedly in all three groups following the intervention. We observed gaps in knowledge between current practice and what is expected in patients with IHD regarding their pharmacotherapy. Patients' awareness regarding IHD and their drug therapy can be improved using simple education intervention methodologies such as information leaflets and brief verbal counseling.