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Knowledge, Attitude and Practice of Vitamin Supplementation among Patients in Out-patient clinics in Baghdad city

Entsar Khaleel Sameen ^{1*}, Shaymaa Hadi Najm ², Haifa Jasim Hmood ³

¹⁻³ Department of Community Health, Medical-Technical Institute/ Baghdad, Middle Technical University, Iraq

* Corresponding Author: Haranath Chinthaginjala, entsar@mtu.edu.iq

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Abstract

Background: Nutritional supplements have many benefits for the human body. Nutritional supplements help maintain body health and body balance in the event of a difference in balance. However, nutritional supplements may affect the human body if misused, especially if a person uses many doses of these vitamins, as they negatively affect the human body and may cause many health problems.

Objectives: to assessment of the knowledge, attitude and practices of patients about the use of nutritional supplements and their effects on body health

Materials & procedures: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted in the city of Baghdad in outpatient clinics in order to assess the knowledge, beliefs and practices of patients about the use of nutritional supplements. Data were collected by means of a questionnaire designed for this purpose. Patients were interviewed after taking oral approvals from patients attending outpatient clinics. Data collection continued for a period of four months from the date of 2/2/2023 until 2/6/2023.

Results: the study revealed that (71%) take vitamins and was taking them with a prescription (85%). Vitamin D was found to be the most popular (63%), vitamin E (78%), and vitamin C (46%). The least known is vitamin K (34%). The source of their information about nutritional supplements was from the Internet, friends and relatives. The most important reason for taking nutritional supplements was due to osteoporosis, which reached (78%). And due to pregnancy and childbirth, they reached (46%). And because of maintaining health and healing from diseases.

Conclusions: This study shed light on an important issue in the society, especially our Iraqi society, where in the recent period and the development of the means of the Internet such as (Facebook and Instagram). The use of these nutritional supplements without medical prescriptions is being promoted, and people are eager to use them without knowing their harm and impact on the body. Therefore, the media must inform people in general about the correct way to use nutritional supplements, and here comes the role of doctors and health personnel to spread sufficient knowledge about nutritional supplements through conducting educational courses, lectures and seminars and publishing them on the Internet so that people have knowledge about them. These nutritional supplements are used healthily.

Keywords: Knowledge, Attitude, Practice, Vitamin, Supplementation, Patients

Introduction

Dietary supplements have a health benefit for the body, which the body cannot manufacture. In some countries of the world, they consider nutritional supplements as greed ^[1, 2]. A necessity for the body, and in some countries they consider them as health products, and others consider nutritional supplements as medicines. Also, the Codex Alimentarius Organization, an organization sponsored by the Agriculture and Food Organization, has classified food supplements that contain minerals and vitamins as foods ^[3, 4]. But it must be used in a healthy manner and with a medical prescription ^[5, 6]. Because if it is misused, it will affect the health of the body. And that among the most important vitamins that the human body needs are vitamins B1, B2, 3B, pantothenic acid, folic acid, and vitamin B12 ^[7, 8].

A person may feel some symptoms and signs as a result of a lack of vitamins. One of the most important symptoms that a person feels is feeling tired and exhausted permanently, pain in the bones and back[9.10], recurring bone fractures, hair loss, depression, and also catching infection quickly and the disease is frequent [11, 12].

Methodology

This study was conducted in the city of Baghdad in outpatient clinics, where 100 patients attending outpatient clinics were interviewed, where information was collected from the patients about their information about nutritional supplements. The questionnaire consisted of several axes. The first axis includes demographic information, the Qani axis includes practices about nutritional supplements, the third axis is beliefs about the use of nutritional supplements, and the fourth axis is about beliefs about the use of nutritional supplements. As the time of the interview lasted 10 minutes, after taking the patients' verbal consent. The results were analyzed using the spss statistical program, as well as using statistics descriptive.

Result

Table (1): shows the demographic characteristics of the studied sample and the percentage in relation to sex. Most of the participants in the study were males with a percentage of (66.6%). As for the level of education, most of them were graduates of middle school and they formed (19%). Most of them were married and recorded (52.3%). As for the profession, most of them were housewives, and they were accounted for (33.3%).

Table 1: Distribution of Studied Sample according to different Socio-demographic

Variables	Response	NO	%
Sex	Male	70	66.6
	Female	35	33.3
Marital Status	Single	10	9.5
	Married	55	52.3
	Widow	15	14.2
	Divorced	10	9.5
	Separate	10	9.5
	Undefined	5	4.7
Education Level	Student	10	9.5
	Doesn't read and he does not write	10	9.5
	Reads and writes	15	14.2
	Illiteracy	10	9.5
	Primary school graduate	15	14.2
	High school graduate	10	9.5
	Middle school graduate	20	19
	Institute graduate	5	4.7
	College Graduate	10	9.5
Occupation	Postgraduate graduate	5	4.7
	Employee	20	19
	Earners	30	28.5
	Unemployed	20	19
	Housewife	35	33.3

Table (2) the second table shows general information about vitamins. It was found that most of the sample studied takes vitamins, and they recorded (71%). And they were taking it with a medical prescription and they made up (85%). And they had information about vitamins and they made up (52.3%). Most of them knew about vitamin A and they made up (41%) and (vitamin E) and they made up (78%).

Table 2: Distribution of Studied Sample according to general information about vitamins

Variables	Response	No.	%
Do you take vitamins?	Yes	75	71.4
	No	30	28.5
Do you take a prescription?	Yes	85	80.9
	No	20	19
Do you have information about nutritional supplements	Yes	55	52.3
	No	50	47.6
Vitamin A	Yes	44	41.9
	No	61	58
Vitamin B	Yes	34	32.3
	No	71	67.6
Vitamin C	Yes	46	43.8
	No	59	56
Vitamin D	Yes	43	40.9
	No	62	59
Vitamin E	Yes	78	74.2
	No	27	25.7
Vitamin K	Yes	34	33.3
	No	71	67.6

Table (3): shows the sources of information about nutritional supplements, where most of the participants had information about vitamins from the Internet and they constituted (45%) and friends and relatives, respectively, were accounted for (20%).

Table 3: Sources of information about vitamins

Variables	NO.	%
Friend	20	19
Relatives	20	19
Television	5	4.7
Internet	45	42.8
Doctor	15	14.2

Table (4): show the reasons why patients took nutritional supplements. The most important reasons were osteoporosis, and they accounted for (74.2%), and for recovery from diseases, they recorded (71.4%). and for improving the condition of the skin, they accounted for (80.9%).

Table 4: Reason for taking nutritional supplements

Variables	Response	NO.	%
Osteoporosis	Yes	78	74.2
	No	27	25.7
Kidney Disease	Yes	34	33.3
	No	71	67.6
Vitamin D Deficiency	Yes	34	32.3
	No	71	67.6
Pregnancy and Childbirth	Yes	46	43.8
	No	59	56
Hair Loss	Yes	43	40.9
	No	62	59
To improve public health	Yes	55	52.3
	No	50	47.6
To heal from diseases	Yes	75	71.4
	No	30	28.5
To improve skin condition	Yes	85	80.9
	No	20	19

Table (5): shows patients' information about the side effects of nutritional supplements, where most of the participants answered that nutritional supplements cause difficulty sleeping and they formed (71%). Also, they cause heart

disease, and they were accounted for (40%).

Table 5: Information for mothers about the side effect of nutritional supplements

Variables	Response	NO	%
Nerve damage	Yes	27	25.7
	No	78	74.2
Difficulty Sleeping	Yes	71	67.6
	No	34	33.3
Affect Health	Yes	30	28.5
	No	75	71.4
Concentrating numbness or tingling	Yes	20	19
	No	85	80.9
Heart Disease	Yes	40	38
	No	65	61.9

Discussion

The demographic characteristics of the studied sample and the percentage in relation to sex. Most of the participants in the study were males with a percentage of (66.6%). As for the level of education, most of them were graduates of middle school and they formed (19%). Most of them were married and recorded (52.3%). As for the profession, most of them were housewives, and they were accounted for (33.3%). This study is consistent with the study conducted by (Emanua AS, 2008) ^[13]. Regarding general information about vitamins. It was found that most of the sample studied take vitamins, and they recorded (71%). and they were taking it with a medical prescription and they made up (85%). And they had information about vitamins and they made up (52.3%). Most of them knew about vitamin A and they made up (41%) and (vitamin H) and they made up (78%). This study corresponds to a study he conducted by (Kenne. *et al*, 2008) ^[14]. the sources of information about nutritional supplements, where most of the participants had information about vitamins from the Internet and they constituted (45%) and friends and relatives, respectively, were accounted for (20%). This study is not consistent with the study he conducted by (Morer, 2009) Where most of their information about nutritional supplements was from TV and relatives ^[15]. The reasons why patients took nutritional supplements. The most important reasons were osteoporosis, and they accounted for (74.2%), and for recovery from diseases, they recorded (71.4%). and for improving the condition of the skin, they accounted for (80.9%). This study corresponds to the study he conducted by (Morer, 2009). It was found that most of the reasons for taking nutritional supplements are arthritis and vitamin D deficiency ^[15]. The mothers' knowledge about the effect of anemia on the pregnant woman, as the majority of the studied sample answered that anemia leads to a lack of efficiency of the pregnant woman, and they recorded (87.5%). And bleeding after childbirth, and they recorded (62.5%), and weakness in the muscles, and they recorded (87%) the study he conducted by (Nislai AW, 2010) ^[16].

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