

Abstract

Two parental of elementary school children were studied to determine their knowledge, attitude and practice towards chronic otitis media. Group 1 comprised 80 subjects whose children used to have chronic otitis media while the other 80 parents had no such experience. Each group was interviewed by using the same questionnaires at the Speech and Hearing Clinic of Ramathibodi Hospital and the E.N.T department of the Children Hospital.

According to Hales criteria over 80% of parents in both group do not have adequate knowledge in otitis media and they needed further improvements. However, the mean score of group 1 was higher than group 2 which was significantly different at 0.01. Parents in both groups appeared to be deficient in knowledge of cause and risk factors of the disease as well as anatomy and physiology of the auditory system.

Both groups had similar attitudes toward the disease which is significantly correlated to knowledge ($P < 0.05$).

Eighty-six percent of parents in group 1 and 93% in groups 2 indicated that they would seek medical treatment if their children had caught a cold for over 1 week. Approximately 60% of parents in both groups would assume the responsibility for the children's compliance until all medications were consumed.

If otitis media occurred, nearly half of the parents would try some preliminary treatments before seeking medical attendance. Home treatment acquired mainly from the neighbours. After medical instruction, 71.8% of the parents were able to give appropriate ear care, oral medications and were willing to follow the medical appointments.

In conclusion, this study showed that most parents are lacking in proper knowledge and attitude towards chronic otitis media. Health education program for otitis media should be devised to close this gap in order to expedite the ongoing preventive measures against chronic otitis media.