ASSESSMENT OF THE AWARENESS OF COMPLICATIONS OF STROKE AMONG STROKE PATIENTS

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A B S T R A C T

Aim: To assess the awareness of the complications of stroke among stroke patients.

Objective: The objective of this study is to find how many stroke patients are aware about the complications of stroke.

Materials and Methods: A questionnaire will be given out to 50 stroke patients.

Background: The stroke is one of the most common cause of death and disability in India. It is an acute neurological injury that occurs due to vascular pathological injury such as brain infarction or haemorrhage. Stroke is classified into three types such as Completed stroke, Evolving stroke and Transient ischemic attack. The time at which stroke gets diagnosed determines the outcome of the disease. If left untreated for a long time, it could lead to various complications such as bed sores, deep vein thrombosis, brain oedema, pneumonia, urinary tract infections, seizures, clinical depression and also could lead to another stroke.

Reason: Due to the lack of knowledge about the complications of stroke, could lead to further deterioration of the patient suffering from stroke. Hence awareness about the complications could help increase the mortality and morbidity of the patients.

INTRODUCTION

Stroke is one of the most causes of mortality and one of the leading causes for adult neurological disability. It is due to a pathologic vascular injury such as brain infarction or haemorrhage. There are three types of stroke attacks such as Completed stroke, evolving stroke and Transient ischemic attack. The main risk factors that could lead to a stroke attack are hypertension, high cholesterol, diabetes and cardiac disease[1]. Medical complications are an important issue after stroke and is a serious barrier for full recovery for the individual suffering from stroke. There a wide range of complications that occur to a patient suffering from stroke, leading to failure in rehabilitation and could also cause death.

The frequency of the complications of stroke range from 40% to 90%. These complications are treatable and preventable if recognised early [2,3]. These complications are usually forgotten and lack of awareness about the complications is the reason for delayed recovery. The different types of complications that can occur are classified as Neurological, Infection, Pain, Complications of mobility, Thromboembolism and Psychological.

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bedsores, blood clots and change in behaviour such as depression and agitation.

Personal Factors
The patients were also asked if they had a habit of smoking, drinking alcohol and tobacco chewing. History of a previous illness and previous stroke attack.

The statistics were compiled with Microsoft Excel 2016.

RESULTS
The participation rate was 100% with the sample size (n=50) representatives of Saveetha Medical college, Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

Knowledge and Experience of the stroke complications:

| Overall sample (n=50) |
|----------------------|
| Average Age          | 57.5 |
| Males                | 74%  |
| Females              | 26%  |
| Personal Factors:    |      |
| - Smoker             | 36% (18) |
| - Previous smoker    | 20% (10) |
| - Heart disease      | 46% (23) |
| - Prior stroke       | 8% (4)  |
| Residential Location - Rural | 100% (50) |

From other studies, it is obtained that there is a low frequency of symptomatic complications in relation to deep vein thrombosis, recurrent stroke and pulmonar yembolism. The complications regarding to pain, depression and agitation which is more difficult to specify have shown a higher frequency in this study than others conducted.

Previous studies indicate a strong relationship between post stroke complications and poor outcome, in which the complications act as a wall for proper recovery [4]. This ensures that proper attention and care should be taken during stroke rehabilitation and any signs of the complications should be treated seriously to prevent further deterioration in the health status of the patient. Proper counselling and awareness should be given to the patients to ensure complete recovery, hence a change in the treatment plan of stroke patients should be considered.

CONCLUSION
Early recognition of the signs of the complications of stroke is the key to maximise recovery of the patient. The study evaluates the gap in the level of awareness of these complications of stroke among stroke patients. This reveals the need of proper education among the masses especially the rural community about stroke and its complications to reduce the mortality rate of stroke [5].

DISCUSSION
This study reports of the level of knowledge of stroke complications among stroke patients in Saveetha medical College, Chennai, Tamil Nadu. From the study it was obtained that the level of knowledge about the complications were poor but the patients were able to identify the complication based on experience. This is a major cause of concern. The findings reveal that out of all the complications, Depression-94% was the most commonly experienced complication followed by Difficulty in swallowing (Dysphagia)- 84%.

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