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Self-medication practice for dental problems: A cross-sectional study among adults in Kuantan, Pahang in Peninsular Malaysia

Ismail, Azlini^a ; Majid, Muhammad Nazmi Abdul^b; Haron, Muhammad Nabil Mohd^c; Halim, Mohd Firdaus Akbar Abdul^d; Ibrahim, Mohamad Shafiq Mohd^e; Ablah, Zurainie^e

Save all to author list

^a Department of Fundamental Dental and Medical Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia, Kulliyah of Dentistry, Pahang, Kuantan, Malaysia

^b School of Dental Sciences, Hospital Universiti Sains Malaysia, Kelantan, Kubang Kerian, Malaysia

^c Ministry of Health Malaysia, Malaysia

^d Faculty of Computer and Mathematical Sciences, Universiti Teknologi MARA Kelantan Branch, Kelantan, Kota Bharu, Malaysia

^e Department of Paediatric Dentistry and Dental Public Health, International Islamic University Malaysia, Kulliyah of Dentistry, Pahang, Kuantan, Malaysia

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Abstract

Aim: To investigate the prevalence, attitude, and pattern of self-medication practice for dental problems among adults in Kuantan, the state capital of Pahang, Malaysia. **Materials and Methods:** This cross-sectional study was conducted among adults over 18 years of age who live in Kuantan via self-administered online- and paper-based bilingual questionnaires. Descriptive statistics and chi-square analysis were run using IBM SPSS® Version 26 software. **Results:** From 275 respondents, one-fifth of respondents (21.8%) practised self-medication for dental problems and most of them obtained a mean attitude score of $21.7 \pm 2.5\%$ out of 25. Most self-medicating respondents were from the age group of 18-27 years (78.3%), females (55%), singles (78.3%), resides urban area (75.0%), and students (71.7%), with a household income of MYR 3860 (46.7%), have no dental insurance (66.7%), and did not have any family relationship with dental personnel (90.0%). Only gender has significant association with self-medication practice, $\chi^2(1, N = 275) = 4.916, P 0.05$. Most of self-medicating respondents gained information related to self-medication from internet (62.0%) and obtained medication from

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pharmacy (78.0%). The major dental problem that triggered them to self-medicate was toothache (76.0%), and the majority used paracetamol for pain relief (62.0%). Their main reason for self-medication was the perceived mildness of the dental problems (60.0%). Conclusion: Adult populations in Kuantan, Pahang have moderate prevalence (21.8%) in self-medicating practice for dental problems which was mainly caused by toothache and was primarily treated with over-the-counter pain-relief medication. They also have good attitude toward appropriate self-medication. © 2023 Wolters Kluwer Medknow Publications. All rights reserved.

Author keywords

Attitude; Dental ; Pattern; Prevalence; Self-Medication

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