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Akkawi, M.E.^{a b}, Elnaem, M.H.^c, Nahas, A.R.F.^{a b}

Self-medication practices among Malaysian older adults during the COVID-19 pandemic
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^a Department of Pharmacy Practice, Faculty of Pharmacy, International Islamic University Malaysia, Malaysia

^b Quality Use of Medicines Research Group, Faculty of Pharmacy, International Islamic University Malaysia, Malaysia

^c School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Ulster University, Coleraine, United Kingdom

Abstract

Objective. To assess the prevalence, patterns, and associated factors of self-medication among Malaysian older adults, and to investigate the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on self-medication. **Methods:** Between January and June 2021, Malaysian older adults aged ≥ 60 years were invited to participate in this cross-sectional study. A self-administered questionnaire was used to assess self-medication knowledge, perceptions, and practices before and during the pandemic. **Results:** Of 170 participants, 122 (71.8%) reported self-medication. Common reasons for self-medication were a perception that the condition was minor and previous experience with the same problem. The main symptoms managed by self-medication were sore throat (56.9%), fever (56%), and headache (53.2%). The most commonly used medications were paracetamol (79.8%), analgesic patches (52.3%), and cough medications (47.7%). Most participants were unaware of possible drug-drug/drug-food interactions involving their medications. 33.6% of participants changed their self-medication practices during the pandemic; 65% of them consumed more vitamins and supplements to boost their health. **Conclusion:** Self-medication for minor ailments is prevalent among Malaysian older adults. Analgesics were the most commonly used medication. 33.6% of participants modified their self-medication practices during the COVID-19 pandemic; 65% of them consumed more vitamins and supplements to boost their health. © 2023 The Hong Kong Geriatrics Society and Hong Kong Association of Gerontology. CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

Author Keywords

Aged; COVID-19; Malaysia; Self medication

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Correspondence Address

Akkawi M.E.; Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah, Indera Mahkota, Pahang, Malaysia; email: mhdeidak@gmail.com

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