Knowledge, Attitude and Practice of Physicians and Pediatricians Regarding the Prevention of Oral Disease in Children

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Abstract

Statement of Problem: General practitioners and pediatricians are in an ideal position to advise families about the prevention of oral diseases in their children because of their frequent contacts with families for routine preventive visits in the child’s first few years of life.

Purpose: The aim of this study was to determine the knowledge, attitude and practice regarding the prevention of oral diseases among an Iranian group of physicians and pediatricians.

Methods and Material: This cross-sectional study was conducted on 296 physicians and pediatricians in Isfahan. A self-administered questionnaire was used to determine the socio-demographic information, knowledge on risk factors, attitude and practice about the prevention of oral diseases. The collected data were analyzed using t-test and Chi-square statistical tests.

Result: The mean scores of knowledge, attitude and practice on the prevention of oral diseases among physicians and pediatricians were 62 ±14, 94 ±8 and 38 ±17, respectively. No significant differences were detected between physicians and pediatricians in their scores (p >0.05). Knowledge and also their practice showed a correlation with their attitude. Physicians who worked at governmental centers had better oral health practice.

Conclusion: Based on the findings of this study, the present educational courses about oral health in medical school both in undergraduate and postgraduate curricula are insufficient. The good level of knowledge and attitude but weakness in oral health practice revealed that the increased level of knowledge and attitude does not necessarily lead to good practice in prevention of oral diseases. Therefore, practical education on oral health and training for referring the cases to dentists during medical students’ education can improve their practice in oral health preventive measures.

Key words: Knowledge, Oral disease, Physician, Pediatrics, Prevention