

ABSTRACT

Between 2-5% of children in Europe and US experience at least one febrile seizure before the age of 5 yrs, and more common in boys. Indian studies suggested that up to 10% of children experienced a Febrile Seizure. Recent data indicated that the incidence rate in India was similar to western countries. The average annual incidence of febrile seizures was 14 per 1000 children in Finland (Karande, 2007). A descriptive cross-sectional study was therefore carried out involving 50 respondents at Kisugu Health Center III. Data was collected using interview guides which contained questions on demographic characteristics as well as the knowledge, attitude and practices towards febrile convulsions among children under 5 years. The data was then analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientist (SPSS) version 18.0.

In conclusion, most respondents possessed varying levels of knowledge about febrile convulsions and although all of the respondents 50 (100%) were aware of what febrile convulsions was all about and they understood it, as well as the various signs and symptoms of the condition including 19 (38%) eyes being widely spread, 16 (32%) body shivering 15 (30%) biting their tongue. However, most respondents 16 (32%) mentioned prematurity as a cause of febrile convulsions, 15 (30%) mentioned brain damage, 11 (22%) diseases such as malaria and 8 (16%) mentioned witchcraft as a cause.

Most respondents had negative attitudes towards febrile convulsions and although 30 (60%) strongly agreed that febrile convulsions is a condition caused by high body temperature, 26 (52%) agreed that febrile convulsion is a condition caused by witchcraft/evil spirits and 40 (80%) strongly agreed that traditional medicine is effective in treating convulsions which was not surprising as 42 (84%) strongly agreed that a child with febrile convulsions can be treated at home with herbs.

Most respondents had poor practices towards management of children with febrile convulsions and most respondents 30 (60%) did not get treatment for their children when they got febrile convulsions.

Furthermore, 30 (60%) mentioned that local herbs could be used as drugs to prevent febrile convulsions and 50 (100%) had ever used various preventive measures of febrile convulsions, 20 (40%) reported that they had ever used smearing onions. However, respondents were aware of what could be done to give first aid to children and 20 (40%) reported smearing onions on the nostril, 12 (24%) tried to bring back the eyes, 10 (20%) applied a cold compress and 8 (16%) took the child to a health facility for treatment.

In conclusion, the study revealed that most respondents lacked adequate knowledge, attitude and practices towards the management of their children with febrile convulsions and this made them unable to offer adequate care and assistance to their children suffering from the condition. Hence, there is need to ensure improved sensitization and health education of caretakers to enable them to provide effective care of children suffering with febrile convulsions.