

ABSTRACT

In the world, the population is ageing. In Sri Lanka we are experiencing this as well. Good health is essential for older people to remain independent and to play a part in the family as well as in the community. Home accident is one of that which causes significant morbidity and mortality in the elderly population and it will be a burden to the family and the country.

The objective of this study was to determine the incidence and to describe the association of selected factors with the occurrence home accidents. This was a descriptive cross sectional study on home accidents and it was conducted among adults 60 years and above in the MOH area Wattala. The sampling method used was cluster sampling and 884 elderly participated in the study. Pre tested interviewer administered questionnaire was used to collect data. The socio demographic factors, economic factors, health related factors and details of home accidents were included in the questionnaire. Home accidents are “accidents that takes places in and around the house. The home must be understood to include the dwelling unit itself, the garden, the yard, garage, and all that is personal to the house hold” (Beckitt 1965). Data were analyzed by using SPSS version 16.0 soft ware package. Thereby incidence of the home accidents of the study population and the age and sex specific incidence of home accidents and its 95% confidence interval (CI) were calculated. To assess the association between home accidents and selected factors, multiple logistic regressions was applied and results were expressed as odds ratios and 95% confidence intervals.

The incidence of the home accidents which had occurred among the elderly during the past one month was 10.9 per 100 elderly (95 % CI = 8.85 – 12.95). Age specific incidence were 16.38 per 100 elderly (95% CI = 11.62 – 21.14) of 75 years and above and 8.89 per 100 elderly (95% CI= 6.71 – 11.07) between 60 to 74 years for the past one month and sex specific incidence for home accidents were 11.17 per 100 females (95%CI = 8.51 – 13.83) and 10.38 per 100 males (95% CI = 7.17 – 13.59) for the past one month.

Out of the 96 home accidents occurred among the 884 elderly, most of them were falls from same level (n=40, 41.7%) and majority of them had occurred between 8.00 am to 12 noon (n=27, 28.1%) and from 4.00pm to 8.00pm (n=26, 27.1%). Majority of the

accidents had occurred in the bed room (n=35, 36.5%). Out of the victims of home accidents 83.3% (n=80) had an injury due to the accident. Out of the injured elderly most of them had injury to their head and neck area (n=33, 41.7%). Out of the 96 victims of home accidents 86 (89.6%) elderly had received treatment and most of them had received treatment from a general practitioner (n=28, 32.6%).

When multiple logistic regressions was applied for controlling confounders, hypertension (OR = 1.96, 95% CI= 1.27 – 3.05), arthritis (OR= 2.37, 95% CI= 1.47 – 3.84) and the mobility in the upper part of the body (OR= 2.24, 95% CI= 1.27 – 3.96) were found to be the statistical significant associated factors with the occurrence of home accidents.

Conclusion of the above findings were that significant proportion of home accidents had occurred among the elderly which is of public health concern and the factors significantly associated with the home accidents were hypertension, arthritis and the mobility in the upper part of the body.

In the MOH area Wattala, the principal investigator recommends various programs to be conducted to address this problem. Awareness programs should be conducted for the care givers on home accidents. Further research should be done to find more risk factors including environmental factors. Healthy ageing is every body's dream. Every body should be working towards it.

Key words – home accidents, elderly