

Abstract

Background – Household accidental burns are one of the common causes of childhood morbidity and mortality. They thrive with limitless curiosity making them vulnerable to face accidental burns. However, these injuries are preventable if necessary home safety measures are practiced and the impact of such burns can be mitigated if timely, adequate, appropriate first aid measures are practiced.

Objective – To describe accidental burn injuries among children attending Burns treatment unit at Lady Ridgeway Hospital and home safety measures practiced by their caregivers to prevent household accidental burns.

Methods - A hospital-based cross-sectional study was carried out among 162 caregivers attending Burns treatment unit at LRH. All caregivers who attended the burns treatment unit during the study period who fulfilled the eligibility criteria were included with a 95% response rate. A pre-tested interviewer-administered questionnaire and data extraction form were used to find out the type/mechanism and severity of the burn injury, home safety measures practice by the caregivers to prevent household accidental burns and first aid measures taken by them following the burn injury. Data on severity and grading of the burn were obtained by tracing bed head tickets. The factors associated with first aid measures were also analyzed.

Results- Majority of the caregivers were females (n= 149,92%),housewives (n=113,69.8%), aged 28-37 years (n=76,46.9%). Children below 4 years were commonly affected by accidental burns (n=106,65.4%). Majority of the children who sustained burn injuries had no previous co-morbidities (n=157,96.9%). Scalds accounted for most of the burns n=105(64.8%,95%CI58.0-72.8).In 90% of the houses, unused power outlets were not safely covered n=134(82.7%,95%CI76.9-88.5), only a few caregivers were careful about the direction of hot pot handles n=47(29%,95%CI22.0-35.9) and 19 caregivers n=19(11.7%,95%CI6.7-16.6) found be living in a house with an unsafe electricity distribution box. Measures practiced as first aid were incorrect in the majority. n=129(79.6%,95%CI73.5-85.8).

Conclusion – Home safety measures in prevention of accidental burns were practiced by majority however, most of them practiced harmful methods as first aids. This study identified the gaps of practiced first aid measures and home safety measures that will

benefit in implementing future community health care preventive programs.

Keywords : Accidents, burns, First aid, children