

Assessing Knowledge and Utilization of Pharmacological and Non-Pharmacological Interventions for Constipation: A Questionnaire-Based Study in Saudi Arabia

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ABSTRACT

Background: Up to one fifth of people experience chronic constipation, which significantly lowers quality of life and causes psychological discomfort. When nonpharmacologic treatment fails to alleviate symptoms, laxatives ought to be included in the regimen for treating constipation. The distinction between "slow transit" and "normal transit" constipation has influenced the choice of first laxative.

Aim: This study aims to assess knowledge and utilization of adults of pharmacological and non-pharmacological interventions for constipation.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional web-based study was conducted. An online questionnaire was developed by the study researchers included participants demographic data, participants utilizations of interventions for constipation, outcome of utilization and their knowledge. The final validated questionnaire was uploaded online using social media plat forms till no more new responses were obtained.

Results: A total of 520 adults were included in the study. Participants ages ranged from 18 to 65 years with a mean age of 33.8 ± 12.4 years old. Exact of 273 (52.5%) complained of chronic constipation, which was for more than 6 months among 172 (63%) of them. Only 60 (11.5%) used medications, 51 (9.8%) used non-pharmacological therapy and 210 (40.4%) used both of them. A total of 199 (38.3%) never used any intervention for constipation. A total of 301 (57.9%) received information about preventing or managing constipation from a health care professional, 64.6% rate their knowledge as good top very good and 120 (23.1%) rated as excellent while 64 (12.3%) rated their knowledge level as poor. The most reported sources of information were Gastroenterologist (25.2%). Old age, having chronic constipation and consultation for specialist were significantly associated with high utilization rate and knowledge level ($P < 0.05$).

Conclusion: In conclusion, the current study showed high frequency of constipation among study adults which was chronic among nearly two-thirds of the adults. Also, most of them used either pharmacological or non-pharmacological interventions to manage constipation. Also, the study participants had high knowledge about these interventions mainly they got their information for health care providers.

Keywords:

Constipation, adults, prevalence, management, interventions, medications, knowledge, Saudi Arabia.1

Bahrain Med Bull 2024; 46 (4): 2393-2399

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