Self-medication with antibiotics by the community of Abu Dhabi Emirate, United Arab Emirates

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Abstract  
Background: Self-medication with antibiotics may increase the risk of inappropriate use and the selection of resistant bacteria. The objective of the study was to estimate the prevalence of self-medication with antibiotics in Abu Dhabi. Methodology: A validated, self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, and the chi-square test when applicable. One thousand subjects were invited to participate in the study. Results: Eight hundred sixty questionnaires were completed, with a respondent rate of 86%, consisting of 66% males and 34% females. Among the 860 participants, 485 (56%) reported the use of antibiotics within the last year. Amoxicillin was the antibiotic most commonly used (46.3%). The survey showed a significant association between antibiotics used and age group (p<0.001). Of the participants surveyed, 393 (46%) stated that they intentionally use antibiotics as self-medication without a medical consultation, a behavior that is significantly affected by educational levels (p<0.001). Two hundred forty-five (28%) participants stored antibiotics at home. These antibiotics were mostly acquired from community pharmacies without prescriptions (p<0.001). Conclusions: The results of this study confirm that antibiotic self-medication is a relatively frequent problem in Abu Dhabi. Interventions are required in order to reduce the frequency of antibiotic misuse.
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Results: Eight hundred sixty questionnaires were completed, with a respondent rate of 86%, consisting of 66% males and 34% females. The prevalence of self-medication with antibiotics was 23.4%. The chi-square test was used to assess the association between self-medication and various demographic factors. The results showed significant differences in the prevalence of self-medication among different age groups and genders.

Conclusion: The prevalence of self-medication with antibiotics in Abu Dhabi was high, and there was a significant gender difference. Public health interventions are needed to educate the community about the risks associated with self-medication and the importance of seeking medical advice before using antibiotics.