

To Assess the Awareness and Health Seeking Practices Related to Vitamin-A Deficiency Diseases in Urban Slums of Delhi, India

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Abstract : Purpose: Vitamin A deficiency prevention programmes are at varying stages of development and implementation in all countries. Vitamin A deficiency has been recognized as a public health issue in developing countries like India. Despite achieving a lot of success a load of blindness due to Vitamin A deficiencies is still high. In this regard, a study was conducted to assess the awareness and health-seeking practices about Vitamin A deficiency diseases among the urban slum population of Delhi, India. Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted in the 5 slum clusters from the urban population of South Delhi. A specially designed pre-tested questionnaire schedule was administered. The study sample was comprised of 1552 inhabitants. Results: The mean age of the respondents was 34 ± 12.1 years. A total of 1003 (64.6%) participants out of 1552, had heard of night blindness. Awareness of night blindness was more in the elderly age group and also found significant ($p < 0.001$). Only 31 (3.1%) knew that night blindness is caused due to deficiency of vitamin A. The awareness of vitamin A prophylaxis programme was significantly higher among elder age ($p < 0.05$) and females ($p < 0.05$). Conclusion: The findings highlighted that even though many of the respondents have heard of night blindness but the awareness about causes and treatment was found low in the community. There is a need for efforts directed to enhance community-level counseling and educational programmes.

Keywords : awareness, health-seeking practices, night blindness, vitamin-A deficiency diseases

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