

Ophthalmic Self-Medication Practices and Associated Factors among Adult Ophthalmic Patients

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Abstract : Background: Self-medication is defined as the selection of medicines by individuals to treat self-diagnosed. There are a lot of concerns about the safety of long-term use of nonprescription ophthalmic drugs, which may lead to a variety of serious ocular complications. Topical steroids can produce severe eye-threatening complications, including the elevation of intraocular pressure (IOP) with possible development of glaucoma and infrequent optic nerve damage. In recent times, many OTC ophthalmic preparations have been possible without a prescription. Objective: In our study, we aimed to determine the prevalence of self-medication ocular topical steroid practice and associated factors among adult ophthalmic patients attending King Saud medical city. Methods: This study was conducted as a cross-sectional study, targeting participants aged 18 years old or above who had used topical steroids eye drops to determine the prevalence of self-medication ocular topical steroid practice and associated factors among adult patients attending ophthalmology clinic in King Saud Medical City (KSMC) in the central region. Results: A total of 308 responses, 92(29.8%) were using ocular topical, 58(18.8%) with prescription, 5(1.6%) without prescription, 29(9.4%) with and without prescription while 216(70.1%) did not use it. The frequency of using ocular topical steroids without a prescription among participants was 11(12%) once and 33 (35%) many times. 26(28.3%) were having complication, mostly 11(12.4%) eye infection, 8(9%) Glaucoma, 6 (6.7%) Cataracts. Reasons for self-medication ocular topical steroid practice among participants were 14 (15.2%) repeated symptoms, 11(15.2%) had heard an advice from a friend, 11 (15.2%) thought they had enough knowledge. Conclusion: Our study reveals that, even though detecting a high level of knowledge and acceptable practices and attitudes among participants, the incidence of self-medication with steroid eye drops was observed. This practice is mainly due to participants having repeated symptoms and thinking they have enough knowledge. Increasing the education level of patients on self-medication steroid eye drops practice and it is associated complications would help reduce the incidence of self-medication steroid eye drops practice.

Keywords : self-medication, ophthalmic medicine, steroid eye drop, over the counter

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