

Acute Asthma in Emergency Department, Prevalence of Respiratory and Non-Respiratory Symptoms

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Abstract : Background: Although asthma is a well-identified presentation to the emergency department, little is known about the frequency and percentage of respiratory and non-respiratory symptoms in patients with acute asthma in the emergency department (ED). Objective: The aim of this study is to identify the relationship between acute asthma exacerbation and different respiratory and non-respiratory symptoms including chest pain encountered by patients visiting the emergency department. Subjects and methods: Prospective study included 169 (97 females and 72 males) asthmatic patients who were admitted to emergency department of two tertiary care facility hospitals for asthma exacerbation from the period of September 2010 to August 2013, an anonymous questionnaire was used to collect symptoms and analysis of symptoms. Results: Females were 97 (57%) of the patients, mean age was 35.6 years; dyspnea on exertion was the commonest symptom accounting for 161 (95.2%) of patients, followed by dyspnea at rest 155 (91.7%), wheezing in 152 (89.9%), chest pain was present in 82 patients (48.5%), the pain was burning in 36 (43.9%) of the total patients with chest pain. Non-respiratory symptoms were seen frequently in acute asthma in ED. Conclusions: Dyspnea was the commonest chest symptoms encountered in patients with acute asthma followed by wheezing. Chest pain in acute asthma is a common symptom and should be fully studied to exclude misdiagnosis as of cardiac origin; there is a need for a better dissemination of knowledge about this disease association with chest pain. It was also noted that other non-respiratory symptoms are frequently encountered with acute asthma in emergency department.

Keywords : asthma, emergency department, respiratory symptoms, non respiratory system

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