

## Knowledge, Attitudes and Common Myths towards Epilepsy among Inward Patients in National Hospital of Sri Lanka

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### Background

People in developing countries have myths and beliefs regarding epilepsy unlike in developed countries where literacy level is high. Though the literacy level is high in Sri Lanka, people have mythical beliefs, which aggravate social morbidity.

### Aims & Objectives

To assess knowledge, attitude and common myths towards epilepsy among inward patients over 30 years.

### Material & Methods

This is a descriptive cross sectional study conducted in General medical wards at National Hospital of Sri Lanka. Equal number of female and male adult patients >30 years were selected randomly up to sample size of 120. Interviewer administered questionnaire was used to collect the data and analysis was done using SPSS 15.0.

### Results

40.8% of the study population had poor knowledge about epilepsy and there is significant difference among

males and females. Giving metal piece to patient's hand to stop seizures (80%) was the most common myth. None of the myths were associated with the educational level.

Even though 73.3% of families accepted their epileptic patients, only 40.% of the community accepted them. There is no significant association between attitude and education level. Though 55.9% of the population allows their child to play with a child who has epilepsy, only 9.2% let their children to marry a person with epilepsy. Swimming, driving, working with machines and climbing trees were considered as risk activities. 57.5% of population acquired their knowledge from patients.

### Conclusions

Activities to increase awareness towards epilepsy in our population especially among females is highly recommended. There can be factors other than literacy level that affect the attitudes and myths towards epilepsy which need to be further studied.

### Keywords

Epilepsy; Knowledge; Attitudes; Myths.