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Creating awareness on Swine flu in Navsari: A survey study

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ABSTRACT:

Swine flu, an infectious disease belongs to the family Orthomyxoviridae, which is endemic in populations of pig has strike in many parts of Gujarat and Rajasthan. The cases are increasing day by day. Poor immunity and lack of knowledge on the influenza virus might be the responsible reason. This is a supportive initiative to government for preventing spreading of this kind of contagious disease by assessing the awareness and educating people about its origin, its outbreak, and spreading-distribution, pattern of transmission of swine flu & treatment and care provided by government free of cost. A leaflet on awareness to and well prepared questionnaire for mapping the burden of disease and awareness about the disease. To analyze the result a percentage analysis method has been used. 81% people were aware about the Swine Influenza virus. 47% male from 82% were having habits like smoking and drinking could be more prone to any infection. 69 % people were aware about its causes and about contingency of the disease. 48% only were aware about basic information on treatment available for the virus. 68% people were aware about the government facility for the patients affected by Swine influenza virus. 78% were willing to know about disease in detail and feel happy to help others in spreading awareness to others. This kind of supportive initiatives may help government in controlling the spread of the diseases. A community pharmacist can play a supportive role in such activity.

KEYWORDS: Swine flu, Orthomyxoviridae, Community awareness, contagious disease, Community pharmacist.

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INTRODUCTION:

The swine flu is an infectious disease caused by virus belongs to the family Orthomyxoviridae, a family which is endemic in populations of pig. These types of virus strains are known as swine influenza.^{1,2} Even though the infection of swine flu does not affect regular human population; there are certain sporadic cases of infections in humans. Generally, these cases occur in those working with poultry & pigs mainly those individuals who are greatly exposed to this type of animal & are at higher risk of infection if they carry any viral strain that is also capable to infect humans. Importantly, the H1N1 influenza virus outbreak in year 2009 in humans and is known as swine flu (swine influenza), in fact it is not caused by a swine influenza virus only. Actually the origins of the new strain are unknown and the World organization for animal health mentions that this strain has been isolated from pigs. It is transmitted easily from person to person because of an ability attributed to a mutation which is not yet identified, and makes it through the saliva, by air, by close contact between the mucous membranes or through hand-mouth transmission due to contaminated hands. This strain because, in most cases the symptoms were mild like normal cold and cough, sore throat, headache and body aches but infected persons are recovered successfully without the need for medical care or medication

use antiviral if the immune system is strong enough to fight against the influenza virus.^{1,2}

Transmission to humans:

People who work in poultry & swine handling unit or have intense exposures are at increased risk of infection with this virus as it is endemic in these animals which constitute a population of human hosts in which zoonosis and reassortment can co-occur.^{2,3} Vaccination of these workers against influenza and by surveillance and assessment on awareness for new influenza strains among this population may therefore be an important public health concern.^{2,4} Transmission of influenza from swine to humans who often work with swine was documented in a small survey study performed in 2004.^{2,5} Other professions at particular risk of infection are veterinarians and workers who is involved in processing of meat and all, although the risk of infection for both of these groups is lower than that of farm workers.^{2,6}

Symptoms in Humans:

According to the centers for disease control and prevention swine flu (H1N1) virus are similar to those of influenza and of influenza-like illness in general. Clinical symptoms like fever, sore throat, cough, body aches, chills, headache, and fatigue. In the year 2009 outbreak of virus has shown an increased percentage of patients reporting diarrhea and vomiting.^{2, 7} The severity of disease can be observed by symptoms like tachypnea, dyspnea, cyanosis and extreme irritability.

Prevention and Precautions:

Keep the hands clean and do not give aspirin to children or teenagers having flu. The nose and mouth must be covered while coughing or sneezing. Hygiene and cleanliness must be maintained by washing hands properly with soap and water. Touching the eyes, nose or mouth without washing hands must be avoided. A doctor must be consulted immediately, and most importantly in case of person is having flu-like symptoms are required to observe carefully. Face masks and gloves must be used when moving out in crowded places or nursing any ill patient. If a person is ill, then they must avoid contact with other people and stay isolated. One should keep their surroundings clean and maintain hygiene and sanitation.^{2,8,9} Try to always consult the doctor before taking any over the counter medicines.

Who is at Risk: pregnant women, young children, age greater than 65 or chronic diseases like asthma, diabetes, pneumonia, death.

Methodology:²

As we know there are more chances of transmission of the disease from person to person so the method of survey was designed in such a way that person to person communication by spreading awareness and assess the awareness in them might be the better way to develop health care system so 100 participants were communicated and received filled questionnaire form with their consent and feedback about the survey program. A well designed questionnaire is prepared with the help of pharmacist and medical practitioner including open and close angle questions. A percentage analysis method has been used for the analysis of the results.

Result: From the study following result has been obtained. Basic demographic detail which is obtained during the study was given below in Table.1

Parameter	Population in %
Age	
20-30	15
30-40	28
40-50	33
>50	24
Male	82
Female	18
Occupation Service	38
Housewife	16
Student	14
Business	32
Smoking/Drinking	47

There were four main questionnaires used to assess awareness on the disease and following response was obtained from the participants.

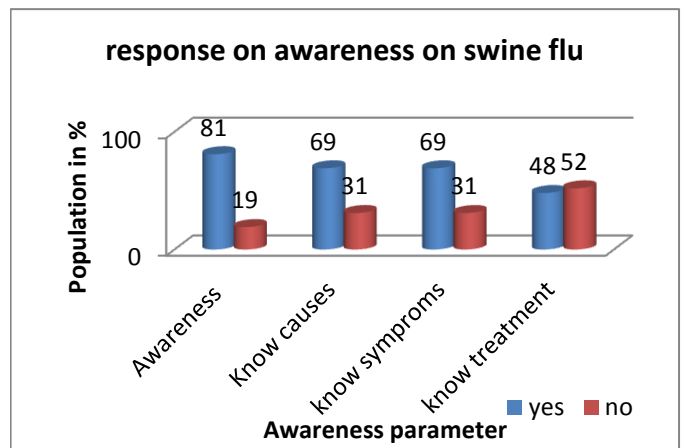


Figure1. Result of response on the awareness parameters on Swine flu by participants.

As it is affecting respiratory tract so the use of mask and willingness to know and spread information and awareness in others are also assessed. The result of the response is mention in following figure.

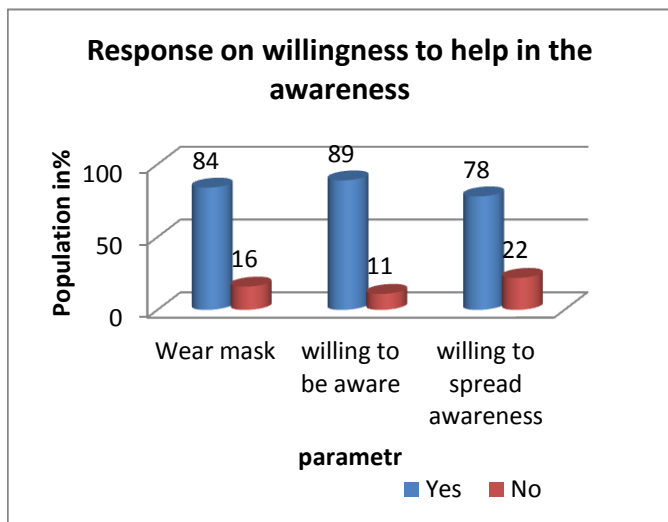


Figure2: Response on the willingness in awareness on swine flu.

The good thing is majority of participants were wearing mask during visit out station or going out from home as an safety measure and think that it is better option for prevention.

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