knowledge regarding rabies prevention among male and female students is same.

Conclusion: Majority of the MBBS students of the first year knew that rabies is caused by virus which is transmitted through dog bite. More than 50% of the students knew about symptoms and post exposure measures correctly. Students had poor knowledge about the other modes of transmission, animal that can transmit rabies, Rabies Immunoglobulin and number of vaccine doses. The knowledge regarding rabies prevention among male and female students is same.

Key Words: Rabies; Rabies Immunoglobulin; Anti Rabies Vaccine; Knowledge; Awareness; Perception; Medical College Students

Introduction

Rabies is an important public health problem in India. Maximum number of deaths due to human rabies is reported from our country. It is estimated that in India 17.4 million animal bites and 20,000 deaths due to rabies occurs annually. 955 of global rabies deaths are because of dog bite.[1,2] Rabies is a 100% fatal disease which can be prevented by timely and appropriate use of Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) using wound care, Anti Rabies Vaccines and Rabies Immunoglobulin (RIG). Lack of knowledge among health providers on basic principles of animal bite management can have detrimental effect on rabies prevention. The use of RIG is only 2%. Health personnel in our country have an important role in preventing mortality due to rabies. The present study was undertaken with an objective to assess knowledge regarding rabies and its prevention among first year medical college students.

Materials and Methods

This study was conducted at Hassan Institute of Medical Sciences (HIMS), Hassan. This was a descriptive study in which all the first year medical students of 2012-13 batch were approached with a pre-designed and pre-tested questionnaire reading various aspects of rabies and its prevention. Data was collected from 90 first year medical students who consented to participate in the present study. The data was analyzed using SPSS Ver 13.0 software.

Results

Out of 99 first year medical students of HIMS, Hassan, 90 participated in the study. Of the 90 students 80 (88.8%) knew that rabies is caused by virus, the rest were of the opinion that rabies is caused by a bacteria. 38 (42.2%) knew annual mortality due to rabies in India. 88 (97.7%) knew that rabies is transmitted through bites of an animal. 54 (60%) students knew that rabies is 100% fatal. 44 (48%) students knew the symptoms of rabies. 60 (66.6%) felt that the bites wounds should be washed. 55 (61.1%) knew that an antiseptic to be applied to the wound. 40 (44.4%) students told animal bite wound should not be sutured or bandaged. 15 (16.6%) students knew that 5 doses of vaccine should be taken when bitten by animal. Only 2 (2.2%) were aware of RIGs.
person with rabies will behave like animal. 15 (16.6%) students felt that the person with rabies becomes mad (Table 3). 60 (66.66%) felt that animal bite wound should be washed with soap and water. 55 (61.1%) knew that an antiseptic has to be applied to the animal bite wound. 77 (77.77%) students are of opinion that animal bite victim should consult doctor immediately. 40(44.4%) students felt that animal bite wound should not be bandaged or sutured. 15 (16.6%) students knew that 5 doses of vaccine should be taken when bitten by animal (Table 4). Only 2 (2.2%) were aware of RIG. 40 (44.4%) students felt that animal bite wound should be washed with soap and water.

Correct knowledge of the causative agent, annual mortality and modes of transmission

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Male (N = 50)</th>
<th>Female (N = 40)</th>
<th>Total (N = 90)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correct knowledge of the causative agent</td>
<td>44 (88)</td>
<td>36 (90)</td>
<td>80 (88.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of annual mortality</td>
<td>22 (44)</td>
<td>16 (40)</td>
<td>38 (42.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of Modes of Transmission</td>
<td>Bite 50 (100)</td>
<td>39 (95)</td>
<td>89 (97.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scratch 02 (4)</td>
<td>01 (2.5)</td>
<td>03 (3.33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Licks 01 (2)</td>
<td>00 (0)</td>
<td>01 (1.11)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Figure in the parenthesis indicates percentage.

Comparability with other studies (5, 6). 4 (8%) of 50 boys and 2 (5%) of 40 girls are of opinion that rabies is transmitted by rodents, which is not true in our country. There was no statistical significant difference between male and female students. 24 (48%) of 50 boys and 20 (50%) of 40 girls knew that symptoms of rabies is hydrophobia and aerophobia. All the respondents knew that rabies is transmitted by dogs and it is comparable with other studies (5, 6).

Regarding the immediate measures that should be done to the bite wound, 35 (70%) of boys and 25 (62.5%) of girls felt that it should be washed with soap and water. Regarding post exposure measures there was no statistical significant difference between knowledge of male and female students which is similar to other studies.

Conclusion

Majority of the MBBS students of the first year knew that rabies is caused by virus which is transmitted through dog bite. More than 50% of the students knew about symptoms and post exposure measures correctly. Students had poor knowledge about the other modes of transmission, animal that can transmit rabies, Rabies immunoglobulin and number of vaccine doses. The knowledge regarding rabies prevention among male and female students is same.

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