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Symptomatology of female patients attending mobile medical clinics in a rural block in Tamilnadu

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Statement of the Problem: Of all the patients presenting with symptoms seeking medical care, only small proportion (15%) of the patients present with identifiable organic causes, 10% with psychological explanation and 75% due to unknown causes. Knowledge on epidemiology of symptoms at primary care level can contribute to wider improvements in health care services through better understanding of disease etiology.

Aim & Objectives: To find out the prevalence of 'symptoms not elsewhere classified' under ICD 10 classification among the female patients attending mobile medical clinics.

Methodology: A cross sectional study was carried out among 7,124 female patients who attended weekly mobile medical clinics in a rural block in Tamil Nadu. Socio-demographic variables, symptomatology, patient history and clinical examination details were collected using a pre-tested structured questionnaire.

Findings: The five common symptoms affecting the study population were myalgia (18.3%), nasal congestion (13.6%), headache (13.1%), lumbar pain (12.5%) and knee pain (9.3%). The most common system affected among the female patients were in the order of general symptoms and signs (R50–R69), circulatory and respiratory systems (R00–R09) and nervous and musculoskeletal systems (R25-R 29). In the age group of 10-19 years and 20-39 years the most common symptom was headache (25.2% and 18.8% respectively). In the age of 40-59 years and 60 years and above, it was myalgia (24.2% and 32.3% respectively).

Conclusion: As pain being most common symptoms, an appropriate strategy and guidelines should be developed to manage the problem of pain at primary care level.

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