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Prevalence of bronchial asthma among teenagers in Western Province of Sri Lanka and its impact on school attendance

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Introduction: Global prevalence of bronchial asthma and wheezing is increasing in rapid phase and has been found to have rising rate of morbidity, mortality and economic burden related with asthma mostly among school children over the last 40 years. As per Michelle L. Moricca, asthma has influenced school absenteeism. Sri Lankan Ministry of Healthcare and Nutrition (2009) states that, hospital admissions and deaths due to bronchial asthma have significantly increased over the last two decades.

Objective: To identify prevalence of bronchial asthma among teenagers in Western Province of Sri Lanka and to explore the impact of bronchial asthma condition on School attendance.

Methods: A descriptive study was done on 162 students (aged 13 to 19 years) selected using convenient sampling from schools of Western Province, Sri Lanka, using a self-administered questionnaire.

Results: From my research 20.4% teenagers said that they were diagnosed with bronchial asthma and wheezing. 5.5% of them stated that they have been having asthma over 3 years 6.2% of them have had GP consultation for respiratory illnesses thrice a month. 8.7% of them said that they have been hospitalized due to it. 31.5% of those with asthma have used an inhaler and 19.7% of them have had nebulization. Only 9.2% of them said that they were compliant with medications. 19.8% of them had missed school.

Conclusions: The prevalence of asthma was moderate among these students and the disease control among them seemed to be largely satisfactory.

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