

**Knowledge, attitude and practices with regards to secondary prevention of acute myocardial infarction among clinic attendees of Cardiology Unit, Colombo.**

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Objective of this descriptive cross sectional study was assess patients' knowledge, attitudes, sources of information and practices with regard to secondary prevention of acute myocardial infarction. The sample consisted of 414 patients who have suffered a single attack of acute myocardial infarction during the period between 01/01/2000 to 01/04/2004. Data were collected with an interviewer administered structured questionnaire which included questions on patients' knowledge, attitudes, sources of information and practices. Patients' knowledge on secondary prevention of acute myocardial infarction was found to be unsatisfactory. When comparing patients' total knowledge scores with certain socio demographic characteristics, a statistically significant higher knowledge was found among patients aged less than 60 years, non Buddhists, professionals and those engaged in business and among patients with an education level of G.C.E ordinary level or higher. Patients' attitudes were also found to be unsatisfactory. A statistically significant more favourable attitudes score were observed among males, patients aged less than 60 years, Buddhists, patients with an educational level of G.C.E ordinary level or higher, professionals and those engaged in business, those obtaining a total monthly family income of Rs . 10000/= or more and among patients with a time lapse of less than one year after the first attack. In contrast, patients' knowledge status was not found to be statistically significant with their attitude scores. The highest source of information on knowledge was doctors (more than 90 percentage). With regard to the practices, only 79.7 percent of patients engaged in regular exercise while 22 percent of patients continued to smoke and 20.5 percent of them continued to consume alcohol. Regular clinic attendance was observed in only 70.3 percent of patients and regular drug intake in 81.4 percent of them. Overall knowledge, attitudes and practices with regard to secondary prevention of acute myocardial infarction were found to be unsatisfactory. More awareness and changes in behaviours of patients should be made through the cardiac rehabilitation centers, hospital staff, public health staff and mass media.