

Use and availability of over the Counter medications among Indian Population

***Dr.Kudaravalli Jyothsna, MBBS,MD, Dr.G.Vijaya Lakshmi,MBBS,MD,
Dr.Vasavi**

**Associate Professor of Pharmacology, Bhaskar Medical College, Hyderabad, telangana,India-500075*

ABSTRACT

Purchase of specific medicines over the counter is legally not recognized in most countries. 'Over-the-Counter (OTC) Medicines' means drugs which are sold by pharmacists without a prescription. Technically, drugs are OTC unless they are specifically stated as prescription only drugs. This article describes the use of OTC medicines and their advantages and disadvantages. Commonly used OTC are for cough, cold, allergies, pain, fever, acidity, diarrhea, and skin-related conditions. OTC medicines are recognized by patient awareness programs, and support of pharmacists and pharmaceutical companies are required to optimize the use of OTC medicines in India.

KEY WORDS: Over The Counter medicine, Cold, Allergies, Pharmacists

Date of Submission: 20-11-2020

Date of Acceptance: 06-12-2020

I. INTRODUCTION

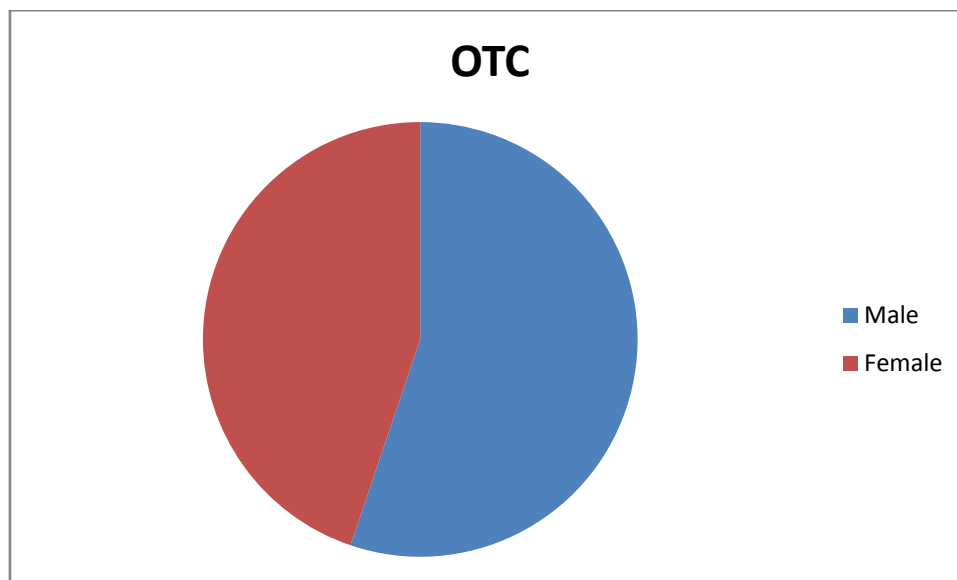
Over the counter medicines are steadily increasing these days. The important reason is due to easy availability and affordability of these medicines for cough, cold, allergies, pain, fever, acidity and skin-related conditions[1]. There is no licensing for these drugs to sell and purchase. This article shows clinical scenario of "OTC medicines" in India.

II. METHODS

Among the articles fulfilling the following criteria were chosen: Articles with the search terms in their title, studies in English language published in 100 peer-reviewed journals, and studies that mentioned about the regulatory and/or clinical scenario pertaining to OTC medicines[2]. There were no restrictions on the date of publication. The search was conducted by 2 independent authors; both of them screened the articles independently for relevance and completeness. Articles containing overlapping or duplicate information were excluded. Only a limited number of articles ($n = 53$) fulfilling the above stated criteria were finally selected. Of these, 46 were full text articles, 2 was an editorial, and 5 were case series. The information available from electronic media (newspapers and websites) has been quoted occasionally. The search was conducted in Jun-August, 2020, at Bhaskar Medical College..

III. RESULTS

Over the counter medication is 20.13%. Among them 55.2% are males, remaining are females. Use of 20% of OTC in less than 20 years age group. Among Paper based surveys 55% are positive for OTC medications. 90% are qualified by Pharmacists shown by their interviews. 96.5% asked the patients about their complaints when they were approached for purchase of OTC drugs, but only 53% counselled the patients regarding instructions for use. 44% of participants stated with cost-effectiveness while choosing OTC medicine. Increased healthcare cost and inaccessible healthcare have led to growing use of drugs over the counter in India. Availability of earlier prescriptions, recommendation from a friend/relative, advice by pharmacist, previous use, and advertisements were the factors reported to be responsible for use of OTC medicines. In India the annual growth rate of increase in OTC medication by 10.9%. Policies developed for drug classification, labeling, licensing, distribution, and pricing of OTCs.



IV. DISCUSSION

OTC medicines allow greater access to treatment of people at large at lower cost for minor or self-limiting illnesses[3]. This is extremely useful for countries like India where the doctor to patient ratio is less than other countries. For ensuring optimum use of OTC medicines, pharmacists can provide a valuable interface by using their professional knowledge to guide patients[4,5]. Misuse of OTC medicines leads to dependence especially to sedatives, analgesics, antacids, laxatives. Drug resistance, and delayed diagnosis of underlying conditions due to use of OTC medicines pose formidable challenges. Abuse to OTC medication is not well established. One report mentions that cough syrups and antihistamine medications sold over the counter are a prevalent form of drug abuse in India.[6]

It was found that 87% of the labels lacked information regarding contraindications[7,8]. In 90% of the labels, adverse effects and in 96% information about their use during pregnancy and breastfeeding were missing[9]. Overall, the label instructions were inadequate and had the potential harming the health of patient. It concealing the states of sorethroat/urinary tract infections[10]. In low socio-economic group and elderly, it is greatest risk as it is easily available to them.

V. CONCLUSION

Prescription monitoring programs (PMPs) collect, monitor, and analyze the electronically transmitted prescribing and dispensing data. These have to be submitted by pharmacies and dispensing practitioners. This data is then used to support to prevent OTC drug abuse.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Kebodeaux CD. Prescription and over-the-counter medication record integration: A holistic patient-centered approach. *J Am Pharm Assoc.* 2019;59:S13–7. [PubMed] [Google Scholar]
- [2]. Sansgiry SS, Bhansali AH, Bapat SS, Xu Q. Abuse of over-the-counter medicines: A pharmacist's perspective. *Integr Pharm Res Pract.* 2016;6:1–6. [PMC free article] [PubMed] [Google Scholar]
- [3]. Thomas L, Jayakrishnan SS, Joseph S, Varghese N, Dileep C, Rasheed A. Assessment of OTC drug labels for patient information in community pharmacies in Thiruvananthapuram city. *Int J Innov Pharm Sci Res.* 2014;2:1034–41. [Google Scholar]
- [4]. Wiley Handbook of Current and Emerging Drug Therapies. New Jersey: Wiley-Interscience; 2007. [Google Scholar]
- [5]. Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Medicines. Cleveland Clinic [Internet] 2016. [Last cited on 2019 Jun 05]. Available from: <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/drugs/11086-non-steroidal-anti-inflammatory-medicines-nsaids>.
- [6]. Ibuprofen in adults. Health Navigator New Zealand [Internet] 2019. [Last cited on 2019 Jun 10]. Available from: <https://www.healthnavigator.org.nz/medicines/i/ibuprofen/>
- [7]. Gupta S. Emerging Indian OTC markets. *AJMST.* 2013;1:24–9. [Google Scholar]
- [8]. Statistics on OTC use. Consumer Health Products Association [Internet] 2019. [Last cited on 2019 May 21]. Available from: <https://www.chpa.org/MarketStats.aspx>.

- [9]. Chang J, Lizer A, Patel I, Bhatia D, Tan X, Balkrishnan R. Prescription to over-the-counter switches in the United States. *J Res Pharm Pract.* 2016;5:149–54. [[PMC free article](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- [10]. Over-the-Counter (OTC) Drug Monograph Process. [Fda.gov](https://www.fda.gov/drugs/current-goodmanufacturing-practices-cgmp-drugs-reports-guidances-andadditional-information/over-counter-otc-drug-monograph-process) [Internet] 2015. [Last cited on 2019 Jun 11]. Available from: <https://www.fda.gov/drugs/current-goodmanufacturing-practices-cgmp-drugs-reports-guidances-andadditional-information/over-counter-otc-drug-monograph-process> .

Dr.Kudaravalli Jyothsna, et. al. “Use and availability of over the Counter medications among Indian Population.” *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, 25(11), 2020, pp. 46-48.