

Knowledge and Attitude of Sciatica Pain and Treatment Methods Among Adults in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract: Background: Sciatica, a pain radiating along the sciatic nerve, can cause significant suffering and functional limitations. Understanding individual populations' knowledge and attitudes about sciatica pain is crucial for designing targeted interventions and enhancing healthcare delivery, especially in Saudi Arabia. This study aimed to evaluate the knowledge and attitude toward sciatica pain and treatment methods among the population of Al-Qassim in Saudi Arabia. Methods and materials: This online cross-sectional study was conducted in the Al-Qassim region, Saudi Arabia, using a self-administered questionnaire. The data was analyzed using SPSS software, with numeric data presented as mean \pm SD and categorical variables as frequencies and percentages. Correlation analyses included the Chi-squared test and one-way ANOVA. Results: The study received 398 responses, from mostly female (n=305, 76.6%) and Saudi adults aged under 30 (n=248, 62.3%). Most participants sought treatment for sciatica pain from a specialist doctor (n=28, 56.0%) or a general doctor (n=10, 20.0%). Physical therapy was the most common self-treatment method (n=11, 32.4%), followed by painkillers and muscle relaxants (n=10, 29.4%). Knowledge and attitude toward sciatica were generally low (mean score: 3.54 ± 2.61 out of 9), with only 70 (17.6%) showing good knowledge. Most respondents recognized practices like spinal imaging, surgery as a last resort, and exercise/sitting habits as impacting sciatica outcomes. Traditional therapies like massage, cupping, acupuncture, and cautery were considered beneficial. Educational level significantly impacted knowledge scores, with higher mean scores among postgraduate education holders and bachelor's degree holders (mean scores: 4.06 ± 2.48 and 3.98 ± 2.53 , respectively). Age, gender, occupation, nationality, and region showed no significant differences in mean knowledge scores. Attitude scores were similar across sociodemographic spectra, with younger respondents having slightly more positive attitudes. Conclusion: The study showed poor knowledge, influenced by education levels, and neutral attitudes about sciatica among residents of Al-Qassim. Therefore, educational programs and engagement of healthcare stakeholders are recommended to raise awareness and improve knowledge and attitudes.