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Knowledge of the Palestinian Final Year Students in the Medical Complex Regarding Drug Induced Ototoxicity: Cross Sectional Study

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Background: Ototoxicity is the tendency of certain substances, which are administered either in a systemic or topical manner, to cause functional impairment and cellular damage to the tissue of the inner ear, especially to the end organs of the cochlear and vestibular divisions of the eighth cranial nerve. It is therefore important that healthcare professionals and prescribers are able to identify and understand such medications and their effects to ensure effective patient care.

Objectives: This study aimed to evaluate the drug- induced ototoxicity among the final year Palestinian medicine, pharmacy, and audiology students.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was designed, and the data were collected via a self-administered online questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed to the pharmacists, medical, and audiology students. The developed questionnaire comprised of five sections, it assessed the knowledge of pharmacotherapy - induced ototoxicity; by means of general information, prevention, monitoring of drug induced ototoxicity and prescribing of ototoxic medications . The mentioned domains were scored as (poor, moderate and good).

Results: A total of 470 questionnaires were collected and returned. The majority (74.5%) of the responders were females. Overall, the participants showed moderate knowledge regarding pharmacotherapy - induced ototoxicity and its prevention (68.3% and 54 %) respectively. However, they showed poor knowledge regarding monitoring of pharmacotherapy-induced ototoxicity and prescribing of ototoxic medicines (48.3 % and 48.5%) respectively. The

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monitoring of pharmacotherapy-induced ototoxicity got the poorest domain (P<0.05). Females were more knowledgeable than males (P<0.05). Audiology students scored higher in the general knowledge (P<0.05), while medical students scored good in prescribing of ototoxic medication (p<0.05). Pharmacist students scored higher in both prevention and monitoring of drug induced ototoxicity(p<0.05).

Conclusion: Healthcare professionals should possess a respective knowledge about pharmacotherapy - induced ototoxicity and how to monitor and manage it. This study presented inadequate knowledge regarding pharmacotherapy - induced ototoxicity among final year medical, pharmacy and audiology students in Palestine. There is an urgent demand to enface efforts to introduce extensive courses concerning pharmacotherapy - induced ototoxicity in the curricula of those undergraduate health specialties in Palestine.

Keywords: Ototoxicity, students, pharmacotherapy, drug-induced ototoxicity

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