

Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices, and Educational Needs Regarding Chlamydia among Healthcare Providers and the General Public

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Background: Chlamydia is a common sexually transmitted infection (STI) worldwide, primarily occurring among young people. It is often asymptomatic but can lead to serious health complications if left untreated.

Aim and Methods: The aim of this cross-sectional study was to evaluate the knowledge, attitudes, practices, and educational needs related to chlamydia among participants from all regions of Oman. The study used a convenience sampling approach, and participants were invited to complete a validated self-administered questionnaire online.

Knowledge about Chlamydia	Correct n (%)
1. Chlamydia is sexually transmitted infection (STI) that mainly transmitted through sexual contact	80(97.6)
2. Chlamydia is very common in people aged less than 30 years old	37(45.1)
3. Chlamydia is curable	59(72)
4. A person looks healthy may have Chlamydia.	56(68.3)
5. People without symptoms can still get problems later on if they are not treated from Chlamydia.	64(78)
6. Using condoms correctly every time in sexual contact can prevent Chlamydia transmission	69(84.1)
7. Sex partners of Chlamydia patients need to be tested for Chlamydia.	72(87.8)
8. Chlamydia infected women can transmit the Chlamydia to their baby.	40(48.8)
9. Chlamydia can cause eye or lung infection in the baby if an infected pregnant woman is not treated.	42(51.2)
10. Chlamydia can cause pre-term delivery if an infected pregnant woman is not treated.	41(50)
11. Having dinner or shaking hands with Chlamydia patients can transmit Chlamydia	60(73.2)
12. Chlamydia can be transmitted by the use of public toilets	44(53.7)
13. Chlamydia is usually diagnosed in males by a urine sample.	43(52.4)
14. Chlamydia is usually diagnosed in females by a swab from the vagina.	62(75.6)
15. The symptoms of chlamydia in females can be a discharge or fluid leaking from the vagina.	63(76.8)
16. The symptoms of chlamydia in females can be pain when urinating or low tummy pain.	66(80.5)
17. The symptoms of chlamydia in males can be can be soreness, an unusual discharge or itching in the penis	61(74.3)
18. The symptoms of chlamydia in males can be pain when urinating	60(73.2)
19. The symptoms of chlamydia in males can be pain or swelling in the testicles.	56(68.3)
20. The symptoms of chlamydia in both female and males can be unusual discharge, bleeding or pain from the anus	43(52.4)
21. Chlamydia can causes a fatal ectopic pregnancy in women	25(30.5)
22. Chlamydia can affect women's fertility	43(52.4)
23. Chlamydia infection can increase the risk of HIV transmission or acquisition	42(51.2)
24. Chlamydia is easily treated with antibiotics	46(56.1)
25. The person cured of Chlamydia can be reinfected	57(69.5)

N = 411

Note: Chlamydia Knowledge was assessed by giving 1 to the correct answer and 0 to the wrong answer. The scale measured chlamydia knowledge from a maximum of 25 to a minimum of 0. Scores < 18 were taken as unsatisfactory and ≥ 18 as satisfactory knowledge of chlamydia.

Results:

- ❑ Of the 411 survey participants, 64% were female and 36% were male, including 48 healthcare providers (11.7%).
- ❑ The majority of participants (80%) had not heard about chlamydia. The participants' overall knowledge about chlamydia, including symptoms, transmission and prevention, was found to be unsatisfactory, with a mean total score of 16.23 out of 25 (SD = 5.98).
- ❑ Factors such as higher education level, having a high monthly income, and working in the medical field were significantly associated with increased awareness of chlamydia ($p < 0.001$).
- ❑ Participants demonstrated poor levels of practice towards chlamydia, with a mean total score of 1.48 (SD = 0.67). Additionally, 399 (97.1%) participants had not undergone chlamydia screening.
- ❑ The study found significant positive linear correlations between knowledge-practice ($r = 0.312, p < 0.004$), knowledge-attitude ($r = 0.405, p < 0.001$), and attitude-practice ($r = 0.248, p < 0.001$) regarding chlamydia.
- ❑ Most participants (365, 88.8%) supported implementing school-based chlamydia education programs.

Conclusion: This study highlights a significant knowledge gap regarding chlamydia among healthcare providers and the general public in Oman. Enhancing knowledge about chlamydia can promote positive practices and attitudes towards the disease. Hence, it is crucial to develop policy guidelines and implement health education programs aimed at enhancing the knowledge of healthcare providers and the general public regarding chlamydia.

References: World Health Organization. (2023). *Chlamydia Key Facts 2023*. Retrieved from: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/chlamydia>

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