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Original Research Article

KAP study on emergency contraception among women of reproductive age group attending JNUIMSRC OPD, Jaipur, India

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ABSTRACT

Background: Unintended pregnancy, unplanned birth and unsafe abortion have been a major challenge to the reproductive health of women worldwide. Despite the availability of highly efficient contraceptive technologies, there are still many undesired pregnancies that put women at a higher risk of mortality, frequently as a result of unsafe abortion. Emergency contraceptive pills can be used to prevent these unwanted pregnancies. Aim of this study was to assess the knowledge, attitude and practice of use of emergency contraception among women of reproductive age group attending JNUIMSRC OPD, Jaipur, India.

Methods: Institution based cross-sectional study was conducted among 100 females of reproductive age group attending JNUIMSRC OPD, Jaipur, India. Data was collected using pretested semi-structured questionnaire after written informed consent. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data generated.

Results: Among respondents who were aware of ECPs, 64% had good knowledge of it, 90% had positive attitude towards ECPs and 63% have used earlier. A significant association was found between age, residence, educational level and occupational status with awareness of ECPs.

Conclusions: Awareness and utilization of emergency contraceptive pills is low among females of reproductive age group attending OPD at JNUIMSRC. Thus awareness should be enhanced through formal education, communication from healthcare professionals and media that can offer trustworthy and accurate information on ECPs.

Keywords: Attitude, Emergency contraceptive pills, Knowledge, Practice, Reproductive age

INTRODUCTION

The inappropriate or inconsistent use of a method of contraception results in unintended pregnancies. These pregnancies may put a financial strain on the family, society, and country as a whole. Use of Emergency contraceptive pills (ECPs) must be timely accessed in order to reduce the occurrence of unwanted births.^{1,2} This requires that community pharmacy practitioners (CPPs) have enough understanding of ECPs and good attitudes towards them.

Any technique of birth control that women can use after unprotected sexual contact but before the potential window for implantation is considered emergency contraception (EC). Emergency contraceptive pills (ECPs) reduce the chance of pregnancy during unprotected sexual intercourse.^{3,4} It gives women one last chance to avoid getting pregnant and should only be used as a backup plan in an emergency rather than as a regular form of family planning.^{5,6}

According to estimates, globally, 22% of these unexpected pregnancies are terminated using unsafe techniques, and 18% result in unplanned births, placing a financial strain

on the healthcare system. 210 million women become pregnant each year, of which 80 million pregnancies are unplanned and 46 million are aborted.

According to WHO unintended pregnancy rates may be an indicator of how well women's reproductive rights are protected in a nation. In the event of unprotected sexual contact or contraceptive failure, emergency contraceptive techniques provide women a safe way to avoid unintended births. Pills are the primary hormonal treatment for emergency contraception; these include estrogen-only, estrogen-and-progesterone combinations, progesterone-only, and selective progesterone receptor modulators (SPRM) like mifepristone (RU486) and ulipristal acetate (UPA).^{8,9} Intrauterine contraceptive technology is one of the non-hormonal EC techniques. Resources, increasing the risk of environmental degradation and social unrest.

The GoI approved the emergency contraceptive pill (ECP) as a prescription medication in 2003 as one of the weapons in the battle against unplanned pregnancy under the national family welfare program. Nonetheless, this fell short of hopes for a significant reduction in unsafe and illegal abortions. As a result, the GoI made ECP an over-the-counter medication in 2005. As per NFHS-5 data, overall contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR) has increased substantially from 54 percent to 67 percent in the country, from NFHS-4.^{10,11}

METHODS

Institution based cross-sectional study was conducted among 100 females of reproductive age group attending JNUIMSRC OPD, Jaipur. JNU is a multi-specialty hospital with daily obstetrics and gynaecology OPD of approx. 500 females of which approx. 80% are in the reproductive age group. The study was conducted in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, JNUIMSRC Jaipur for 1 year from January 2021 to January 2022. Total 100 females of reproductive age group attending JNUIMSRC OPD, Jaipur, India. Before enrolling the patient into the study, patient was explained the type and nature of the study and informed written consent was taken.

Statistical analysis

The data will be analysed as per appropriate statistical analysis. Data was collected using pretested semi-structured questionnaire after written informed consent. By an analysis of relevant national and international literature, the questionnaire was created.

The questionnaire aimed to gather data on respondents' sociodemographic characteristics, including their knowledge, attitudes, and use of emergency contraceptives as well as their residence, religion. Once the data was collected, it was further processed and analyzed using descriptive statistics and tests of association.

RESULTS

Total 100 questionnaires were administered and 99 retrieved, giving a response rate of 99%.

The maximum (45%) respondents were in the age group of 25-29yrs, 38% in the age group of 20-24yrs, 15% in the age group of 30-35yrs and remaining 2% were in the age group of 35-40 yrs. Majority (61.6%) of the respondents were from the urban area and majority (39.2%) had primary level of education and majority (82%) were housewife by occupation and majority (57.1%) belonged to lower socioeconomic status.

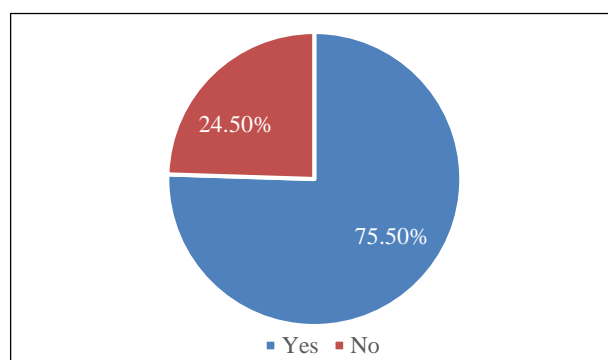


Figure 1: Distribution of induced abortion among females with unwanted pregnancies.

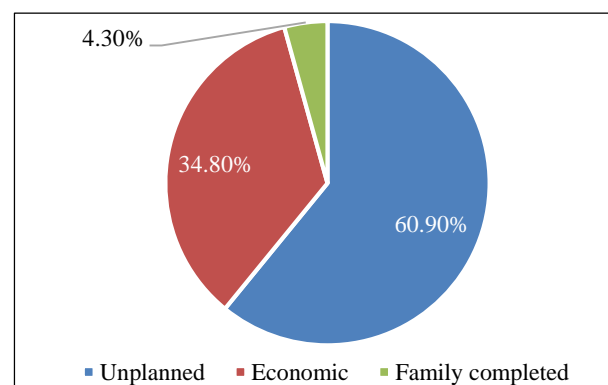


Figure 2: Various causes of induced abortion.

The 41.4% females had unwanted pregnancies out of which 24.5% had induced abortions with unplanned pregnancy (60.9%) being the most common cause and other causes were financial problems (34.8%) and family completed (4.3%) (Figure 1 and Figure 2).

The respondents had maximum knowledge about condoms (37.9%), followed by sterilization (17.9%), then OCPs (15.8%), any modern method (12.6%), IUD (11.6%) and with least knowledge about ECPs, natural method and Implants (Figure 3).

Out of 100 respondents, 4.2% were aware of emergency contraceptive pills and majority (47.9%) of them got to know it from media and other sources of information were

health personnel (16.7%), friends/relatives (9.4%), magazines (9.4%), formal education (9.4%) and internet (7.2%) (Figure 4).

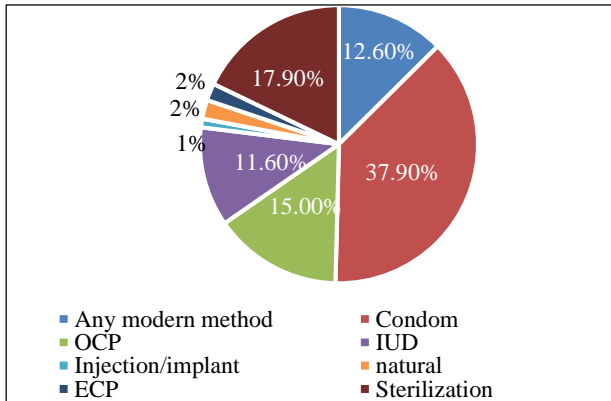


Figure 3: Knowledge about various methods of contraception.

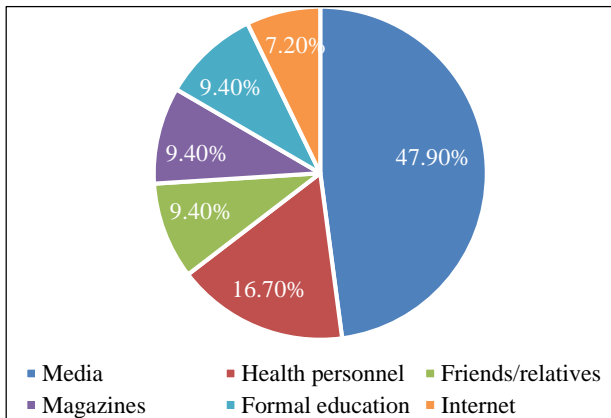


Figure 4: Knowledge about the source of information.

Among respondents who were aware of ECPs, 64% had good knowledge of it, 90% had positive attitude towards ECPs and 63% have used earlier.

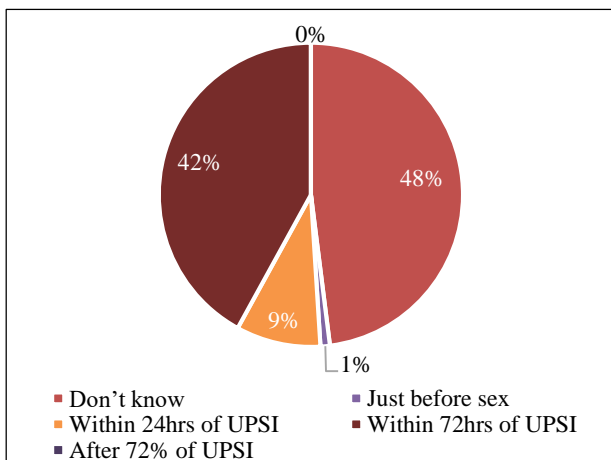


Figure 5: Knowledge about the correct timing of usage of ECP.

The 48% didn't know the appropriate time when an ECP should be used while 42% knew that ECPs should be used within 72 hrs of UPSI, 9% believed that it should be used with 24hrs of UPSI (unprotected sexual intercourse) and remaining 1% believed that ECPs should be used just before sex (Figure 5).

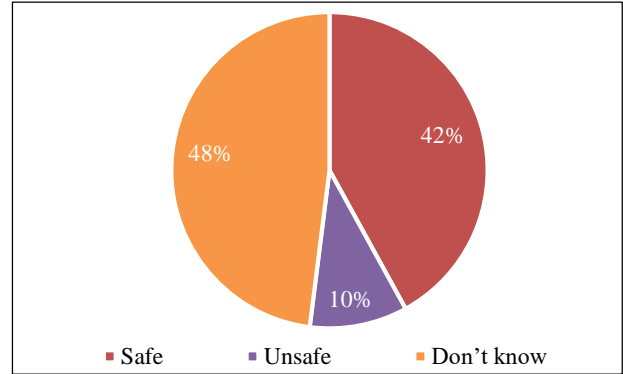


Figure 6: Knowledge about the safety of usage of emergency contraceptives.

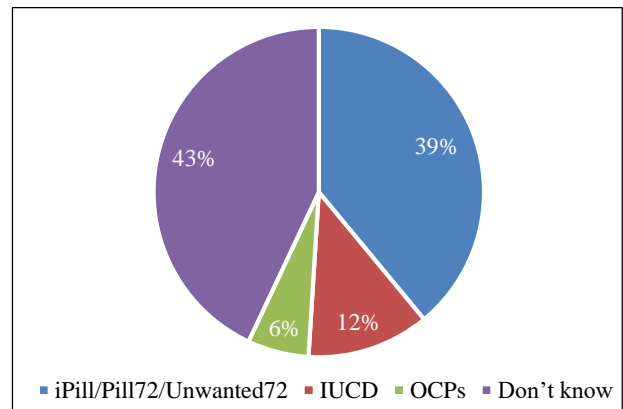


Figure 7: Knowledge about the different emergency contraceptives available.

A 48% of the respondents didn't know about the safety of emergency contraceptives and 42% believed them to be safe and remaining 10% had the notion that its unsafe to use emergency contraceptives (Figure 6).

A 43% of the respondents didn't know about emergency contraceptives, 39% respondents knew about iPill, pill72, Unwanted72. 12% and 6% knew about IUCDs and OCPs respectively as emergency contraceptives (Figure 7).

A 51.6% of the respondents believed that emergency contraceptives can be taken without prescription from a doctor while remaining 48.4% believed that they cannot be used without proper prescription.

A 55% of the respondents had no idea about the side effects of use of emergency contraceptives while 21%, 14%, 7% and 3% believed heavy bleeding, infertility, irregular menses and nausea vomiting respectively to be

the other side effects of use of emergency contraceptives (Figure 8).

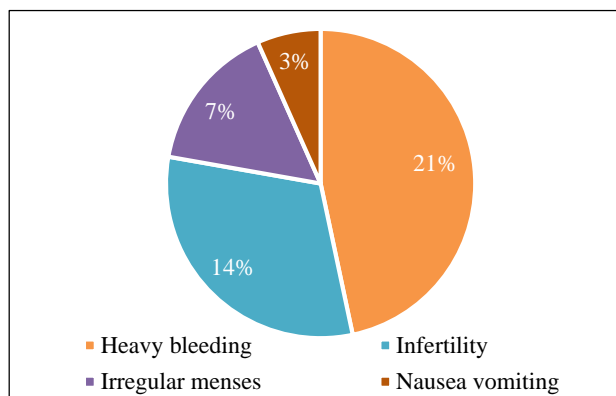


Figure 8: Knowledge of adverse effects of ECPs.

Majority (59.6%) of the respondents didn't know about the correct dose of emergency contraceptives while 33.3% believed that two tablets should be taken while remaining (7.1%) believed that single dose should be taken (Figure 9).

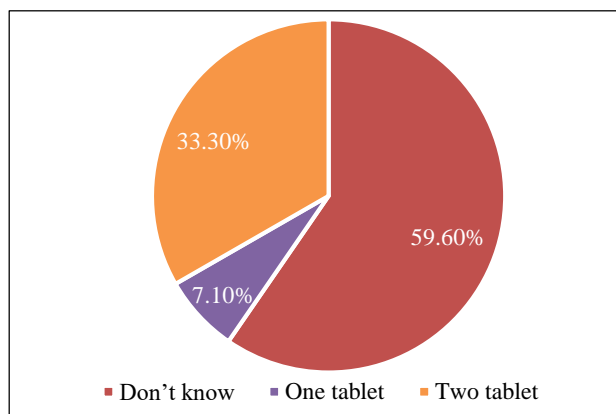


Figure 9: Knowledge about recommended dose of ECP.

DISCUSSION

Total 100 questionnaires were administered and 99 retrieved, giving a response rate of 99%. The maximum (45%) respondents were in the age group of 25-29yrs, 38% in the age group of 20-24yrs, 15% in the age group of 30-35yrs and remaining 2% were in the age group of 35-40 yrs. Majority (61.6%) of the respondents were from the urban area and majority (39.2%) had primary level of education and majority (82%) were housewife by occupation and majority (57.1%) belonged to lower socioeconomic status.

A 41.4% females had unwanted pregnancies out of which 24.5% had induced abortions with unplanned pregnancy (60.9%) being the most common cause and other causes were financial problems (34.8%) and family completed (4.3%). The respondents had maximum knowledge about

condoms (37.9%), followed by sterilization (17.9%), then OCPs (15.8%), any modern method (12.6%), IUD (11.6%) and with least knowledge about ECPs, natural method and Implants.

Out of the 4.2% of respondents who were aware of emergency contraceptive pills, majority (47.9%) of them got to know it from media and other sources of information were health personnel (16.7%), friends/relatives (9.4%), magazines (9.4%), formal education (9.4%) and internet (7.2%).

Among respondents who were aware of ECPs, 64% had good knowledge of it, 90% had positive attitude towards ECPs and 63% have used earlier. In a study by Irfan et al, in terms of knowledge of ECPs, about 149 (65.6%) had good knowledge, whereas 78 (34.4%) had low understanding. Only a smaller portion of the CPPs (21.1%) said that they had received information regarding ECP more than once in the previous years when asked. The majority (81.5%) thought that for ECPs to be clinically effective, they should be used after unprotected sexual activity.¹² A 48% didn't know the appropriate time when an ECP should be used while 42% knew that ECPs should be used within 72 hrs of UPSI, 9% believed that it should be used with 24 hrs of UPSI (unprotected sexual intercourse) and remaining 1% believed that ECPs should be used just before sex.

The 48% of the respondents didn't know about the safety of emergency contraceptives and 42% believed them to be safe and remaining 10% had the notion that its unsafe to use emergency contraceptives.

The 43% of the respondents didn't know about emergency contraceptives, 39% respondents knew about iPill, pill72, unwanted 72. 12% and 6% knew about IUCDs and OCPs respectively as emergency contraceptives. 51.6% of the taken without prescription from a doctor while remaining 48.4% believed that they cannot be used without proper prescription.

The 55% of the respondents had no idea about the side effects of use of emergency contraceptives while 21%, 14%, 7% and 3% believed heavy bleeding, infertility, irregular menses and nausea vomiting respectively to be the other side effects of use of emergency contraceptives.

In a study by Shreshtha et al, the respondents reported that irregular menstruation (36.7%), vaginal bleeding (35.9%), nausea/vomiting (35.2%), infertility (28.1%), and headache (18.8%) were the most frequent adverse effects.¹³

Majority (59.6%) of the respondents didn't know about the correct dose of emergency contraceptives while 33.3% believed that two tablets should be taken while remaining (7.1%) believed that single dose should be taken. In a study by Yadav et al, 8.2% of those surveyed had used ECP "within 72 hours" and 15.2% had done so previously. The

37.5% found it effective when used immediately, 50% found effective when used within a day. ECP was helpful according to 21 of the respondents who used it, although 14 (60.9%) of them also reported side effects such as irregular menstruation (50.3%), nausea and vomiting (29.2%), stomach discomfort (8.3%), and others (12.5%).¹⁴

CONCLUSION

Awareness and utilization of emergency contraceptive pills is low among females of reproductive age group attending OPD at JNUIMSRC. Thus awareness should be enhanced through formal education, communication from healthcare professionals and media that can offer trustworthy and accurate information on EC Ps.

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Conflict of interest: None declared

Ethical approval: The study was approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee

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