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Knowledge, attitude and practices on universal micronutrient supplementation among mothers of infants in the Kurunegala District of Sri Lanka

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Introduction

Multiple micronutrient (MMN) supplementation programme was commenced to combat micronutrient deficiencies among children in Sri Lanka. However, its acceptance is not evaluated properly.

Objectives

To describe the knowledge, attitude and practices of MMN supplementations among mothers of infants aged 9-12 months in the Kurunegala district.

Methods

A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted in four randomly selected Medical Officer of Health (MOH) areas in Kurunegala district from January to March 2023. All mothers of infants aged 9-12 months attending the well-baby clinic were recruited. Data were collected using an interviewer-administered questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS 22.0.

Results

A total of 395 children (males-49.4%) were recruited. A majority (223[56.5%]) of mothers stated that their children had shown less acceptance of food after mixing MMN. 299(75%) noted that it reduced the food taste and 175(44.3%) said that it gave a bad smell upon mixing. 385(97.5%) mothers knew the correct dosage of MMN and 376(95.2%) knew the correct frequency. However, only 219(55.4%) were aware of the correct duration that MMN should be given and only 285(72.2%) had continued MMN when the child is sick. 376(95.2%) thought that MMN is beneficial to their child but only 276(69.9%) were aware on its benefits. 134(33.9%) mothers said that adequate information was not provided when receiving MMN.

Conclusion

Most mothers perceived that children showed less acceptance of food after mixing MMN into the food. MMN had altered the taste of food and introduced a bad smell to food. One-third of mothers stated that adequate information was not provided when receiving MMN.

Key words: *Multiple micronutrients; Acceptability; Kurunegala*