

Childhood home based unintentional injuries Surveillance in Punjab India

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Objective

1. To determine the prevalence and pattern of unintentional injuries among children
2. To study the physical environment of house for various risk factors leading to unintentional injuries.

Introduction

Injury and violence are public health problems now-a-days all over the world. Over 950000 children less than 18 years of age die as a result of injuries, 95% of which occur in low and middle income countries (LMIC) including India. Unintentional injuries account for 90% of these cases. The death rate due to unintentional injuries is almost double in LMIC as compared to developed countries. It is seen that most of childhood unintentional injuries occur in and around the home of children. India, with a population of app 1.25 billion, had about 40% children. India is passing through a major socio-economic, epidemiological and technological transition. Migration and rapid urbanization is contributing towards the development and growth. Mechanization is changing the traditional lifestyle and thereby resulting an increase in injuries in India. Despite efforts to understand the burden of injuries, the magnitude in terms of morbidity and mortality is still not clear as injury information did not receive much importance in the health sector. Few small studies have reported the prevalence and causes of childhood unintentional injuries. However, there is lack of proper surveillance data on burden of unintentional injuries among children

Methods

We conducted a surveillance study in 30 villages of Ludhiana district of Punjab, India. A total of 900 houses having at least one child below the age of 19 years formed the sample of study. The data pertaining to socio demographic profile, physical environment of house and injury details (in last 5 years) were recorded on the pre designed performa. The data were statistically analyzed using SPSS version 20.0.

Results

In the 900 houses, there were 1910 children below the age of 19 years. Of these houses, unintentional injuries to their children was observed in 386(42.9%) houses during the last 5 years. The prevalence of unintentional injuries among children was 20.6%. There were 60.1% children below the age of 5 years who suffered injuries. 67% of injuries occurred among male children. Majority of injuries (63.5%) occurred during evening time, of which 87.2% occurred while the child was playing in and around the home. Fall was the most common (64.5%) mode of injury followed by 12.3% cut injuries due to chopper/fodder cutter or old instruments/machinery lying the courtyard. There were 16 injuries due electric current, 6 cases of dog bite, 4 cases of drowning and 4 cases of unintentional ingestion of poisonous substance. 48.3% of injuries were severe, 35.9% minor, 9.4% trivial and 5.9% very severe. There were 2 fatal death also.

Conclusions

The burden of unintentional childhood injuries in India is substantial but it a neglected health problem. There is a strong need for continuous surveillance of childhood injuries in India using systematic techniques so as to plan for timely intervention.



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