

Maternal Understanding of Infant Teething: A Community-Based Assessment in Primary Care by Evaluating Parental Perspectives in Family Medicine Clinics

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ABSTRACT

Teething, a developmental milestone shared by all children between 6 and 30 months, typically lasting approximately two years, is a universal experience. While it can be worrisome, it is usually a normal and benign part of being a child. Many inaccurate beliefs about teething exist among mothers and healthcare staff. This study aimed to assess the level of understanding and practices related to teething among mothers residing in Bisha, Saudi Arabia. This cross-sectional study included 422 mothers who were selected systematically. Their knowledge, perceptions, and practices were evaluated using a specially developed scale. Knowledge and perception were categorized as adequate or inadequate, and perceptions of teething were measured using a Likert scale. The average knowledge score of the mothers was 9.38, with a standard deviation of 2.5. Adequate knowledge was found in 32.2% (n=136) of the respondents, while poor knowledge was observed in 67.8% (n=236). Mothers' occupation was strongly related to their knowledge level ($p<0.05$). Moreover, urban residency was three times more likely to produce a better perception of teething than living in a rural area (adjusted OR=3.3, 95%CI=1.06- 10.29). Employed individuals were eight times more likely to have a good perception (adjusted OR=8.1, 95%CI=1.92- 33.9). The current study demonstrated that most Saudi mothers had a knowledge gap regarding teething. The current study revealed the necessity and importance of educational programs for increasing mothers' knowledge and practice of teething. We can empower mothers to better understand and manage their children's teething discomfort by addressing these knowledge gaps.

Keywords: Teething, Children, Mothers, Knowledge, Perception, Practices

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