

SUMMARY

H1N1 influenza pandemic occurs when a new influenza virus emerges for people which have little or no immunity. This cause serious illness and can spread around the country and the world in very short time, no one can predict when a pandemic might occur. Experts from around the world are watching the H1N1 situation in countries very closely, and the virus may begin to spread more easily and widely from person to person, (CDC, 2009).

The aim of the present study was to assess students' awareness about influenza A/H1N1 disease of secondary schools for girls. To fulfill the aim of the present study, the following *research questions* were formulated:

- Is there a relation between socio- demographic data of the students and their knowledge, practices and attitudes regarding influenza A/H1N1 disease?
- Is there a relation between environmental home condition of the students and their knowledge, practices and attitudes regarding influenza A/H1N1?

The study was conducted in all secondary schools for girls at Benha city, that named; Benha Secondary School, El-Shimaa Secondary School, and Om El-Moamneen Secondary School. The study subjects included 230 students. They were selected as systematic random sample.

Two tools were used for collecting data, a structured interviewing questionnaire and observational checklist.

A- A structured interviewing questionnaire: consisted of the following five parts:

Part I : Socio-demographic characteristics: consisted school name, age, students order, family size, mothers education & occupation, fathers education and occupation, and family income.

Part II : used to assess the environmental home conditions such as residence, house type, availability of separated kitchen, source of water supply, number of room, ventilation, waste disposal system and its type.

Part III: designed to assess the studied sample' knowledge related to influenza A/H1N1 as meaning of the disease, its clinical manifestations, mode of transmission, high risk group, methods of diagnosis, preventive method, presence of vaccine and preventive role of the school nurse.

Part IV: designed to assess the studied sample' practices through asking questions related to influenza A/H1N1, which included continuous hand washing with soap and water, using antiseptic solution, cover nose and mouth, go to the doctor in case of symptoms appearance, avoid kissing, touching eyes, nose and mouth, taken the vaccine, taking a lot of fluid, vegetables and fruits,...etc.

Part IIV: designed to assess the students' attitudes toward influenza A/H1N1 as the danger of the disease, fearing from eating meat, necessary of pigs eradication, follow up the news of the disease, taken precaution by authorities, taken the vaccine if it present, notification of infected cases if present, following the preventive measure related the disease,...etc.

B- Observational checklist to assess environmental schools conditions:

It consisted of number of students in the class, class room area, class room ventilation, source of water supply, play ground area, laboratory area, existence of medical clinic, number of infected cases, distribution of health education media of the disease, distribution of prevented supplies for the disease and its type.

Data collection phase was lasted from beginning of March 2010 till May 2010 in all secondary schools for girls at Benha city that named Benha Secondary School, El Shimaa Secondary School, and Om El-Moamneen Secondary School.

The current study revealed the following findings:-

- Regarding knowledge about influenza A/H1N1, the total knowledge score was satisfactory in 85.7 % of the studied sample, and the main sources of their knowledge was radio and TV (91.7%).
- Considering practices, 85.7% of the studied sample had always practice in form of continous hand washing with soap and water, 82.6% covering of nose and mouth by tissue when coughing & sneezing, 55.2% & 54.3% respectively rarely wearing mask in overcrowded areas and use the sleeve not hands when coughing or sneezing in case of un availability of tissue, and the total knowledge about practices score was good in 60.4 of the studied sample.
- Regarding to attitudes, 82.2% of the studied sample always prefere to know the preventive measure for the disease, and the total attitude score was positive in 52.2% of the studied sample.
- There was high statistical significant correlation between total knowledge, practices and attitudes of the studied sample.

From the results of this study, the following are recommended:

- Increasing the health educational messages provided through TV because it is a very effective method of health education.
- Reinforcing health educational programs for school students in different forms as in subjects, school activities to enhance their abilities to react and respond influenza A/H1N1 situation.
- Enhance the role of the school health nurse related to healthy practices about H1N1 influenza and others infectious diseases.