

The Knowledge of Lithuanian Dentists about Medical Emergencies and First Aid

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Abstract

Background: Medical emergencies can occur at any time in the dental practice, posing a direct threat to patient's life. No information is available on the occurrence of, and dentists' readiness for, medical emergencies in Lithuanian dental practice. **Objective:** This study was designed to obtain information on the incidence of medical emergencies in Lithuanian dental practice and dentists' knowledge and readiness for such events. **Methods:** The cross-sectional study used an original sample of 510 randomly selected Lithuanian dentists. The semi- self administered questionnaire consisted of two parts: a demographic part and knowledge test. The questionnaires was distributed and collected between December 2015 and February 2016. **Results:** The response rate was 80.8%. Almost all respondents (93.9%) have participated in first aid courses at least once, however 32.5% of all respondents do not know what drugs are in their emergency kit. Every third respondent doubts that he could perform initial resuscitation effectively. The number of correct answers in the knowledge test ranged from 8 to 23 (mean, 18.2 ± 2.9) out of 25. **Conclusion:** The results of this study reflect an alarming situation about the capability of dentists to deal with medical emergencies. Attending continuing dental education programs consisting of workshops and hands-on courses in this field should be mandatory.