

Public Knowledge of Varicella Disease and Vaccine in Rural Illinois and Indiana

Purpose

- Chicken pox is among the most common of vaccine-preventable diseases in the U.S.
- Prior to 1995, there were approximately 4 million cases per year, with 11,000 hospitalizations and 100 deaths
- Since licensure of the vaccine in 1995 the incidence has declined

Purpose

- Public knowledge about chicken pox and the vaccine is often inaccurate
- This study evaluated baseline public knowledge, provided information to increase awareness of chicken pox and the vaccine, and evaluated the increase in knowledge after intervention

Methods

- A nine question survey was constructed following the main points of an instructional video about chicken pox and vaccine
- The survey was administered to adults at three sites: the offices of Dr. Philip Zumwalt in Watseka, IL. and Dr. Gonzalo Florido in Kentland, IN., and the Ford-Iroquois Bi-county Health Department in Watseka, IL.

Methods

- Adults were asked to fill out the nine question survey at the reception desk at the time of check-in
- Participants then watched a 16-minute educational video about chicken pox
- Participants then completed the back side of the survey form consisting of the same nine questions

Methods

- The video was shown continuously in its entirety and participants did not necessarily see the video from beginning to end
- No identifying information was used
- Data were evaluated for differences in pre- and post-intervention knowledge

Results

- 54 participants completed surveys, with 43 at the county health department, 9 at the office of Dr. Florido, and 2 at the office of Dr. Zumwalt
- The average age of study participants was 29.3 years
- 75% of study participants had children 5 years old or younger

Results

- The major barrier to increasing the number of participants was willingness of reception staff to ask individuals to participate
- Data from all sites showed inaccurate knowledge of chicken pox and vaccine
- Data from all sites showed no measurable improvement in knowledge after watching a short educational video about chicken pox and chicken pox vaccine

Conclusions

- Chicken pox is a serious and common illness, which is now vaccine-preventable
- The level of participation in this study was low, and data could not be compared between sites
- Study participants may have ignored the video and filled out the post-intervention survey anyway
- Participants may have had difficulty understanding the video or survey due to language, educational, or environmental barriers

Conclusions

- Data on chicken pox vaccine currently support the efficacy and safety of using the vaccine to prevent disease
- Informational videos may be ineffective methods to increase public knowledge of chicken pox and vaccine when shown in this manner
- Further studies identifying useful interventions to increase public knowledge of medical topics would be beneficial to researchers and clinicians involved in patient education