

# The attitude, knowledge and management response to fever experiences

## Abstract

**Background:** The most common symptoms experienced by individuals is “fever”. It can be managed with the use of antipyretics or without the use of antipyretics. The leading cause of fever symptoms are infectious diseases. The attitude, knowledge and management of fever were studied.

**Results:** In this study, the overall participants are 100 persons, 14 health care workers, 20 children and 66 students. We evaluated among the participants the students have the highest frequency of not considering fever as an important physiological response and mechanism of defense against infections, which has led to poor knowledge and management of fever. It is shown that the highest usage of antipyretic among the participants is “paracetamol”. Among the parents interviewed, it is discovered that most parents becomes afraid when the symptom begins in their children.

**Conclusion:** Fever (high body temperature) is sign/symptoms not actually a disease. Our study has shown that there is high rate of fear among parents when their children experience fever. Fever can be managed at home without the use of medication but it becomes complicated, individual can seek for medical attention.

**Keywords:** fever, medication, antipyretic, pediatric, health worker, students

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## Introduction

Fever is a condition when an individual has a temperature above normal that is 38°C and above. It is the most symptom that keeps one alert to the change in the body system. Fever symptom gives the awareness that a foreign body has invaded the internal body environment, which causes a change to body homeostasis by increasing the body temperature are making the internal body environment uncomfortable for the foreign invaders. In some cases, fever can be managed at home without medication that is; nurses/caregiver can use a wet sponged/towel to rub the forehead and body without the person being hospitalized.<sup>1</sup> But if the fever persists and also causes pain in other areas like headache, backache, dizziness, then one should seek for medical attention. It can be treated by medications. The medications used for fever is called “antipyretics”.

Sometimes fever can be fatal if left untreated and it rises up to 41°C. It causes damaged to the brain.

It is important that people check their temperature at home with a thermometer especially for children, in case they sense any unusual feeling of sickness or fatigue or sleepiness, depression, because fever can be a sign for so many medical/conditions. In children, the common infectious diseases that leads to fever are; flu, diphteria, pneumonia, chicken pox.<sup>2-5</sup>

Fever is stated by people to be a disease or illness. But it is an important part of the body’s defense to fight against infectious disease agents such as bacteria and viruses. It is not an “infectious disease” as people think.

This study is designed to evaluate the understanding of Fever among health workers, students on campus and among parents. And to describe the attitude, knowledge and management of fever among the participants in the respect to ages, sex, work status.

## Materials and method

The research was carried out in Near East University, North Cyprus and in the school hospital of Near East University.<sup>6</sup> There were 100 persons that participated in the research carried out. 66 students based on sex and marital status, 14 health care workers based on sex and marital status, pediatric based on sex.

The research was carried out among the participants in Near East university campus both in the dormitory and in Near East Hospital. The mothers in the hospital were interviewed to provide their experiences with their children having fever.

The method used to carry out this study was an interview with the answering of the questionnaire form by every participant. The questionnaire form contains 20 questions with direct options for both students and health worker. While 21 questions for pediatric. At questionnaire administration, an explanation was given on how to fill the form to the participants.<sup>7-10</sup>

Statistically, the data was analyzed. The frequency table was used to analyze the frequency percentage of values of the group variables. Cross tab was used, comparing two variables among the group participant.

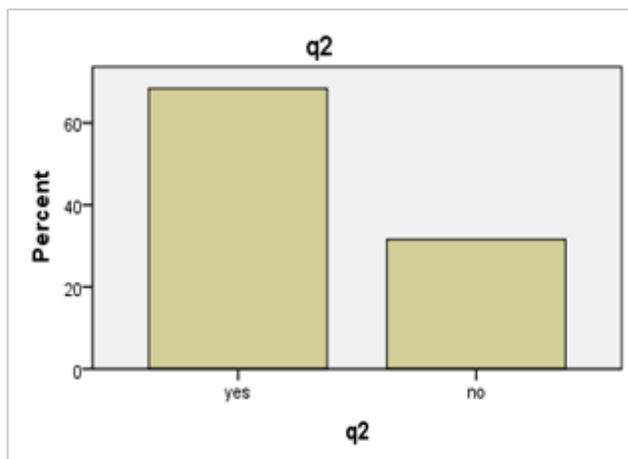
- I. The two variables analyzed in the “student group” were sex and 20 question variables.
- II. The two variables analyzed in the pediatric group were sex and 21 question variables
- III. The variables analyzed in the health workers were sex, marital status and the 20 question.

Chi-square was used for differences between groups of categorical variables.

## Results

The total number of participant who were studied are 100. The study has shown the rate of people’s response to fever.

The research was conducted among 20 mothers to know their understanding and their child’s experience with fever.<sup>11</sup> The attitude, knowledge and the management towards their child feverish condition were observed. Both male and female children were observed. It has shown in this statistics there is a higher rate of mother becoming afraid when their child experiences this symptom (Figure 1).



**Figure 1** This is showing statistically, the rate of fear in mothers when their children have fever.

70% of mother believes that fever is harmful to the body. The most occurrences of infectious diseases among the children observed was “flu”, and it is known that infectious diseases trigger the body temperature of becoming high. It was also observed that the most used antipyretic drug is paracetamol, and the high frequency of mothers treat their children with recommendation from doctors rather than self recommendation. This condition in children has brought about fear in mothers.

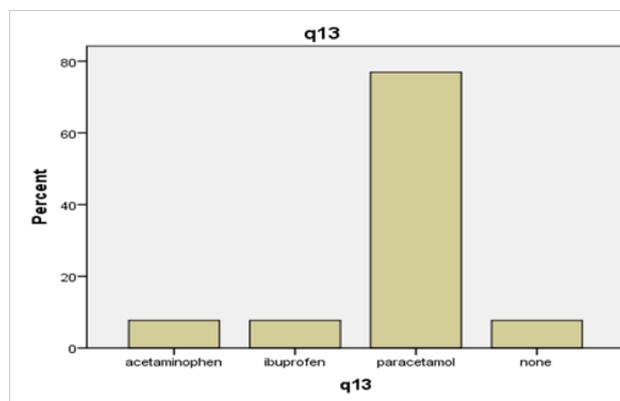
The research was carried out on the health workers in the hospital. Most of the health workers strongly agree that fever is the body defense mechanism against infectious diseases. A higher percentage takes recommendation from doctors rather than the over the counter medication.

And the most used antipyretic medication among this group of subject is paracetamol of 71.4% (Figure 2).

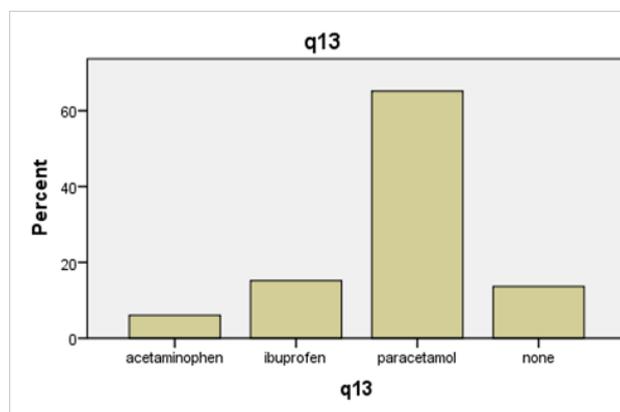
It is observed among the different groups of subject the research was carried on, the health workers had higher understanding of the occurrence of fever, due to their health knowledge and experiences in their work field.

66 students were interviewed, 37 females and 29 male. It was observed that high rate of students interviewed, view fever to be a huge problem to the health, some view it to be a disease. 15.2% strongly agree that fever is the body defense mechanism against infectious diseases. High percent of students did not understand that fever means high body temperature. 56.1% students measure their body temperature by feeling the hotness of their body while 25.8% uses digital thermometer and 7.6% electronic thermometer. It was

observed that the 63.6% students interviewed get “over the counter drug” rather than getting recommendation of medication from doctor. And the most used medication is paracetamol (Figure 3).



**Figure 2** The use of the most antipyretic.



**Figure 3** The highest frequency of students.

The highest frequency of 42.4% students interviewed does not know the antipyretic drug they are allergic to.

This research has shown the level of knowledge about fever, the view of what fever is all about and its management among the three groups.

## Conclusion

Fever (high body temperature) is sign/symptoms not actually a disease. Our study has shown that there is high rate of fear among parents when their children experience fever. Fever can be managed at home without the use of medication but it becomes complicated, individual can seek for medical attention.

People should develop an attitude of taking recommendations from a physician for diagnostic test whenever a symptom of high temperature is experienced. It can be as a result of a disease. Fever is a symptom or sign that shows that there is an imbalance in the internal body environment.

## Acknowledgement

None.

## Conflict of interest

None.

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