

**PREVALENCE OF OTC MEDICATIONS IN RURAL AREAS - AN EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SURVEY REPORT****B. Srinivas Teja\*<sup>1</sup>, V. Brahma Naidu<sup>2</sup>, R. Venkateswar Rao<sup>1</sup>, N.V. Rama Rao<sup>1</sup> and Ramarao Nadendla<sup>1</sup>**<sup>1</sup>Department of Pharmacy Practice, Chalapathi Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Guntur.<sup>2</sup>MBBS, Guntur Medical College, Guntur.**\*Corresponding Author: B. Srinivas Teja**

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**ABSTRACT**

Medication, when it is used properly, it may cure the problem, but when misused it may create a new problem. Prevalence rate of Drug related problems are more common in our country. Due to many reasons, this Drug related problems create excess burden on patient's health. Adherence to OTC medication has gained momentum in our community, which is the major concern to health care.

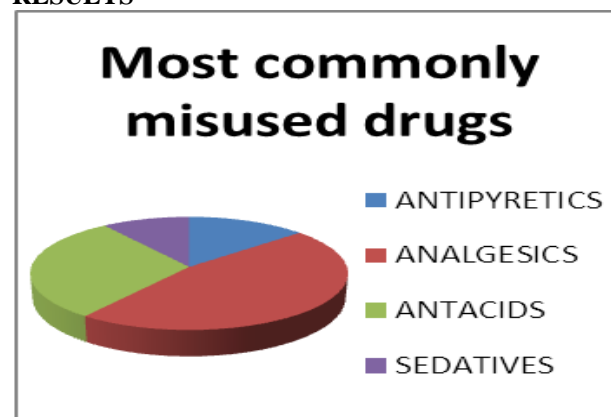
**KEYWORDS:** over the counter drugs, rural population, medication adherence.**INTRODUCTION**

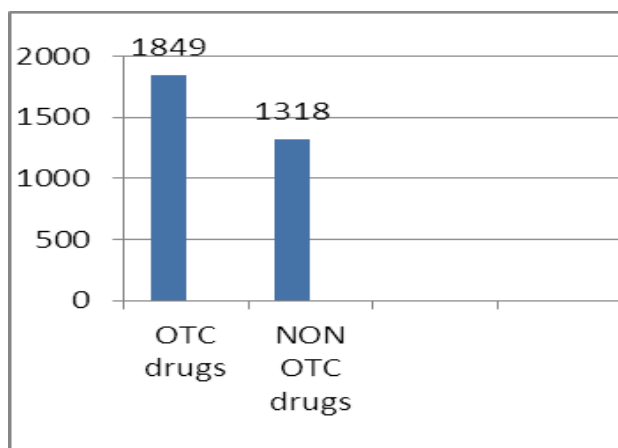
Self-medication is the use of drugs with therapeutic intent but without professional advice or prescription. Medication abuse is a common problem which may create an excess burden on the patient as well as the whole health care system. Medication abuse can be promoted majorly in OTC Counters in many of the Developing countries. It has also been defined as the use of nonprescription medicines by people on their own initiative.<sup>[1]</sup> Drugs that are prone to self-medication include analgesics, antimalarials, antibiotics and cough syrups, among others.<sup>[2]</sup> Self-medication with antibiotics occur in many developing countries where drugs are not well-regulated. Hence there is easier access to prescription or over-the-counter medicines without prescription. Self-medication, could cause bacteria resistance to such antibiotics and may precipitate the emergence of multiple resistant organisms that would be difficult to treat and this has caused increased morbidity.<sup>[3-6]</sup> Perception of illness and incessant advertising, among others, have increased the prevalence of self-medication which accounts for about 2.9 - 3.7% causes of death in hospitals as a result of drug-drug interactions.<sup>[7-13]</sup> It has also been reported that drug use is influenced by the sociodemographic characteristics of drug consumers such as gender, morbidity, age, attitudes about life and health, stress and social roles but has nothing to do with education and ethnicity.<sup>[14-16]</sup> Some of the problems associated with self-medication such as masked diagnoses, use of excessive drug dosage, prolonged duration of use, drug interactions, polypharmacy and superinfection can occur in self-medicating individuals. However, there is substantial variation in the prevalence rates of self medication among developing and developed nations due to inherent

differences in cultural and socioeconomic factors, disparities in health care systems such as reimbursement policies, access to health care and drug dispensing policies.<sup>[17]</sup>

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The study was conducted in rural areas of Guntur district for a period of 3 months. Individuals willing to participate and give their informed consent were included in the study and individuals who are not meeting the study criteria were excluded from the study. Overall 3167 participants were involved in the study, and over 821 families have been included. We have assessed the patient's dependence on OTC medication by using a standard questionnaire method. After collecting the data from the participants, it was sent to the interpretation of results by using Statistical Analysis.

**RESULTS**



### DISCUSSION

Here, we have found the figure, which is a major concern that 1849 individuals are using OTC counters and 1318 individuals are using medication according to their physician's order. We have also found that, most commonly used drug is Anti-pyretic agent for the condition fever. Hence as a health care professional, it is the duty of pharmacist to create awareness in public on these sensitive issues, which may cost undesired outcomes to the society.

### CONCLUSION

The adherence to OTC medication in rural areas was found to be high. By providing adequate information and proper Counselling to the people there was decreased usage of OTC medications and hence reduced triggers of Side Effect's & resistance.

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