

Voluntary Body Donation - A Survey of Awareness Among nursing Staff.

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Type of Publication: Original Research Paper

Conflicts of Interest: Nil

Abstract

Background- Body donation is defined as an informed and free act of giving one's whole body after death for medical education and research.

Methods- The present study is questionnaire based, KAP (Knowledge, attitude& practice) study, carried among 50 nursing staff members in the age group of 21- 60 yrs. The nursing staff members of anatomy department were excluded.

Results- Merely 12% of them were aware that body donation is one of the method of dead body disposal & 88% mentioned about the traditional methods only. Only 2% of study members knew the correct time limit to donate the body. Majority (90%) of study members were unaware about the process of body donation.

Conclusions - All the nursing staff have less awareness of embalming. Hence there is a need of creating more awareness regarding embalming.

Keywords- Body donation, Awareness, Nursing staff.

Introduction

Body donation is defined as an informed and free act of giving one's whole body after death for medical education and research¹.

Donation of body to science was 1st heard in 1832, when British Utilitarian Philosopher Jeremy Bentham's body was donated . India first experienced of body donation was in the year 1956, when the body of Pandurang Sridhar Apte was donated to B. J. Medical College Pune, Maharashtra, India.²

Most important reason for no body donation in India is lack of awareness. Only 22% of the general population is aware that the body can be donated. Other is spirituality and religious belief, fear that the body may not be treated with respect and dignity. Medicos in addition cannot accept the concept of dissection of their own body³.

Material and Methods

The present study is questionnaire based, KAP (Knowledge, attitude& practice) study, carried among 50 nursing staff members in the age group of 21- 60 yrs. The nursing staff members of anatomy department were excluded. A structured questionnaire was administered after due consent by the faculty. The data was analyzed and percentages were calculated and represented graphically.

Results



Figure 1 : distribution of knowledge regarding body donation.

All the study members knew the term body donation. Merely 12% of them were aware that body donation is one of the method of dead body disposal & 88% mentioned about the traditional methods only. Only 2% of study members knew the correct time limit to donate the body. Majority (90%) of study members were unaware about the process of body donation.

Only 10% of study members were aware about the procedure of body donation and only 2% knew the Act which governs the body donation. 8 % knew that the death certificate is mandatory during body donation process.

Discussion

Body donation is a voluntary act that a person can do to save lives or to give his body to science. Donations of the body are mainly to the medical colleges for teaching and research purposes. The demand for cadavers remains strong and numerous ideas have been voiced to augment the supply still the number of voluntary body donation is low. One of the major factors for low rate of body donation is lack of awareness. Medicos should be sensitized about body donation and procedure of preservation to answer the common questions raised by donors, but they themselves are less aware and hesitant

about body donation. Hence, this study was undertaken to know the awareness of body donation and embalming amongst the medicos⁴.

The results of our study suggest that educating medical faculty and professionals regarding the altruistic act of body donation are important for educating the general population and are in congruence with Saritha et al.⁵ Donation of body in the interest of medical education and research can always be considered as one's final gift which lasts for the next generations. Mere a change in the attitude towards voluntary body donation is the need of the hour. Thus, it is imperative that our medical fraternity and health care professionals themselves should support and propagate this issue.

Conclusions

All the nursing staff have less awareness of embalming. Hence there is a need of creating more awareness regarding embalming.

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