

# Evaluation of Parental Self-Medication in Children and Associated Factors: A Cross-Sectional Study in Adana, Turkey

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## ABSTRACT

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**Background:** Self-medication (SM) is a common practice and still a major public health issue around the world. Medicines are mostly administered by parents to children, and they play a critical and crucial part in the use of curative medicines.

**Objective:** This study was carried out to evaluate the parental SM practices in children and associated factor in Adana, Turkey.

**Methods:** A web based cross-sectional survey was carried out among the parents between December 7, 2020 to April 10, 2021. This study was conducted according to “Checklist for Reporting Results of Internet E-Surveys (CHERRIES)” guidelines. A one-page survey included details about sociodemographic characteristics, source of information, questions related to parental SM practices for their children and reason behind SM practices was distributed among eligible participants via social media channels (Instagram, WhatsApp and Facebook accounts). The final automatic responses from Google Form were retrieved as “Excel datasheet” and then cleaned, coded, and imported into the SPSS statistical tool (v.25.0).

**Results:** A total 370 participants were included in this study (response rate of 95.4%). The observed prevalence rate of parental SM practices was 63.5%. Fever (39.5%; n=146) and abdominal pain (23.8%; n=88) were the most common problem for that parents use SM practices. The frequently used class of drugs was antipyretic followed by analgesics and antibiotics. The main reasons for SM practices were personal experience in treating children (n=186; 50.3%) and high consultation fees (n=72; 19.5%). Mother working status and parental educational level were two main factors found to be statistically associated with SM practices ( $p<0.05$ ).

**Conclusion:** Majority of the parents reported the SM practice in order to treat their children illnesses. There is urgent need for parental educational program, development of national polices about medication access and durable actions to discourage the medications selling without prescription and SM practices.