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Assessing the impact of medication adherence on health outcomes in pediatric patients with chronic diseases

Naimish Nanda[1], Syed Sajid Ali Syed Sabir Ali[2]

[1]Assistant Professor, Department of Pharmacy, Kalinga University, Raipur, India.
[2]Research Scholar, Department of Pharmacy, Kalinga University, Raipur, India.

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ABSTRACT
Children's prescription non-adherence is a challenging problem for the healthcare system. This problem may be influenced by the child's age, lack of knowledge about the illness or its treatment, culture, family dynamics, financial situation, drug use, and preferences. The most effective practices may focus on well-defined mediations for each patient and their family members. Drug specialists are at the forefront of patient care and can help patients take their drugs more consistently by providing guidance and building a trustworthy relationship with the family. This article discusses frequent adherence issues with children's chronic diseases and offers some methods to improve adherence. Pharmacotherapy is frequently used over an extended period of time to treat chronic disorders. Approximately 50% of patients do not take their prescriptions as recommended, so even while these drugs are effective at fighting disease, their full advantages are sometimes not realized. Poor drug adherence can be caused by a wide range of factors, including those pertaining to individuals, doctors, and health care systems. The complexity and diversity of drug adherence hurdles necessitate multifaceted approaches to adherence improvement.

Keywords: *Chronic diseases, pediatric medication, and medication adherence*

1. INTRODUCTION

The complex problem of prescription adherence is unquestionably linked to the patient, guardians, and the entire interdisciplinary medical care team, including drug specialists. "The degree to which an individual's way of behaving - taking drug, following an eating routine, or potentially executing way of life changes, relates with concurred proposals from a medical services supplier" is a possible definition of prescription adherence. In a surprising sense, the appropriate use of physician-endorsed medications is essential to their viability. Health care professionals should work to increase drug adherence among all patients in order to maximize patient outcomes and support safe and efficient therapy. Children may have trouble adhering to their medication regimens. Medication adherence rates range from 50% to 60% for many chronic disease conditions, including epilepsy, cancer, posttransplant therapy, and juvenile rheumatoid arthritis. Long-term drug treatment for chronic conditions is usually necessary, along with good counseling to improve at-home self-care skills including blood glucose monitoring and asthma inhaler use [1].[17]. The number of ED visits and hospital stays among pediatric patients with chronic illnesses is increased by non-adherence. Pharmacists and other members of the healthcare team should actively work to encourage adherence through coordinated approaches. Adherence to medication is more complicated in children than in adults, particularly in those with chronic conditions. Nonadherence in pediatric patients can be caused by a variety of distinct conditions, such as the child's age, social, cognitive, and/or parental engagement.[2] The purpose of this article is to outline some of the obstacles to children's medication adherence and investigate potential remedies. Children typically have a high prevalence of prescription non-adherence, despite possible detrimental effects on the efficacy of drug therapy [9].

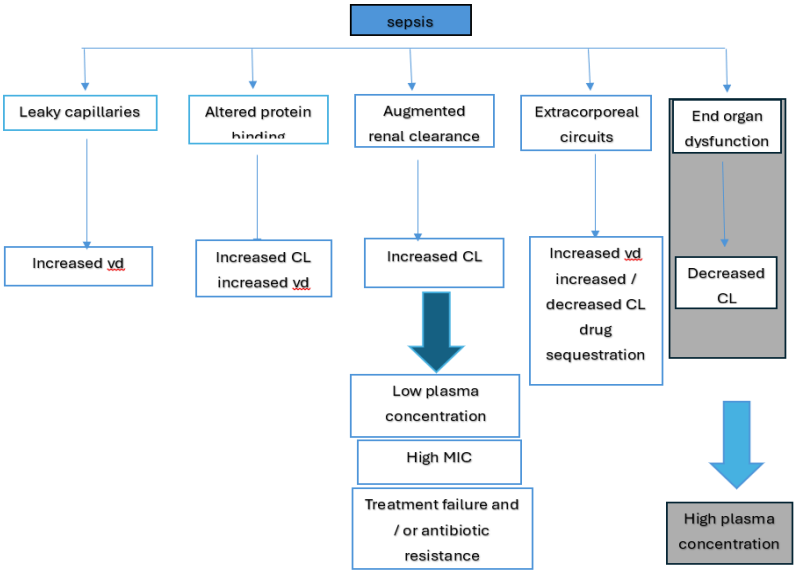

Figure 1: Pharmacokinetic considerations and dosing strategies of antibiotics in the critically pediatric patient

According to the Pediatric Self-Administration model, the following factors predict poor adherence: the individual (e.g., age, oppositional behaviors), the family (e.g., unfavorable family change or oversight), the local community (e.g., peer support), and the medical services frameworks (e.g., patient-supplier correspondence). These components may be changeable or unchangeable. Additionally, adherence has been linked to social and variety-related characteristics (e.g., racial/ethnic personality, English proficiency, and financial status). [3]. The process by which people take their prescription drugs as directed is known as medication adherence. As a result, "non-adherence" refers to a variety of departures from the recommended course of therapy. Because of its high frequency and severe effects, WHO views this phenomenon as a "global problem of striking magnitude." One of the fundamental prerequisites for successful treatment is drug adherence. Erroneously taking medications lowers treatment efficacy and raises healthcare expenses. Finding the causes of non-adherence and putting in place specialized evidence-based treatments that support the prevention and/or correction of such misbehavior are crucial. These therapies include, among other things, treatment simplification-based interventions, behavioral-counseling interventions, cognitive-educational interventions, social-psycho-affective interventions, technical tools and reminders, monitoring feedback, and rewards. The main factors preventing parents and kids from taking their medications as prescribed include stress, everyday life, and normal family disputes. Concerns about the efficacy of pharmacological therapy, fear of pharmaceutical side effects, and parents' ignorance of the diagnosis are some of the reasons why kids don't take their prescriptions. Children who suffer from chronic illnesses are particularly affected by this.

Research question

- What elements affect children with chronic illnesses' adherence to their medications?
- How does medication adherence affect the health of young patients with long-term conditions?

Objectives

- To identify the healthcare, psychological, and demographic elements that influence children with chronic illnesses' adherence to their prescription regimens.
- To assess the impact of medication adherence on long-term illness outcomes in children.
- To look into the drug-related, psychological, and systemic barriers to medication adherence that young patients and their caregivers face.

2. METHODOLOGY

Study design: A mixed methods research technique that combines quantitative and subjective methodologies will be used in this study. The preceding consideration and prohibition guidelines were used to select children with epilepsy and nephrotic conditions who were attending specialty facilities. For the children with epilepsy, specific information was documented about the onset time, kind of seizures, recurrence of seizures, duration of illness, antiepileptic medications, therapeutic consistency, seizure control, and family history. At the time of evaluation, patients with epilepsy were receiving antiepileptic medications

(phenytoin sodium, sodium valproate, carbamazepine, and clobazam) either alone or in combination. Further, all the children with nephrotic syndrome and epilepsy were assessed for cognitive functions (intelligence and memory). These tests were administered in a separate place and in the presence of mother or father. Tests items were presented to the subjects as per instruction provided in the manual. Responses were carefully noted in the standard proforma. In order to identify common themes and experiences in treating children's chronic illnesses, a subset of caregivers and healthcare professionals will also take part in focus groups. These qualitative observations will supplement the quantitative data by providing context and an understanding of the broader emotional and environmental factors driving adherence.

3. FACTORS AFFECTING PEDIATRIC ADHERENCE IN CHRONIC DISEASES

Age: Because children develop cognitively and emotionally as they become older, age has a big impact on pediatric non-adherence. Younger kids usually lack the mental and physical skills necessary to properly give their own drugs.[15] They are therefore totally reliant on their caregivers to provide them their prescriptions. It is not entirely clear how teenage age and medication adherence are related. Age was linked to greater understanding of the condition but not to better adherence, according to a study of 8–16-year-old asthmatic patients.[10]. Despite their greater knowledge, the authors hypothesize that teenagers may lack the ability and/or motivation to manage their chronic condition. One explanation for this could be that the teen's therapy is still handled by caretakers, which runs against to the teen's desire to become competent and independent and results in non-adherence.[4]. Adolescents who are given complete, noncompetitive power and responsibility for their lives, on the other hand, could not be prepared for this duty or might not think that they require the medication to manage their sickness, which might also lead to nonadherence. Adolescents frequently think they are unbeatable and that there won't be any repercussions for skipping medication. Adolescent drug adherence is also significantly hampered by the negative consequences of these medications, especially the cosmetic side effects. During the transitional and formative years, these consequences affect body self-image and have an emotional toll. During this time, adolescents experience fast and profound change, and body image becomes crucial. Adolescents' self-esteem and body image may suffer as a result of side effects including weight gain or acne, which may influence their decision to begin or continue therapy as directed [5].

It may be difficult for parents or caregivers from lower socioeconomic backgrounds to understand the need of medication adherence, proper dosage, and recognizing symptoms that require medical attention since they are less health literate. This misinformation could lead to therapy cessation, missing doses, or incorrect dosage.

Family structure: Pediatric adherence may be influenced by characteristics such as stability, overall stress, parental marital status, and family size. The demands placed on finances in a large family may make it more difficult for the caregiver to pay for prescription drugs and keep track of medication compliance.[11]. The number of siblings and adherence was shown to be inversely correlated in a study that looked at the reasons behind non-adherence in pediatric and adolescent cancer patients. Compared to adherent patients, non-adherent patients had statistically significantly more siblings [14]. One element influencing medication adherence is the caregivers' marital status. The capacity of the family to effectively meet medication adherence goals for pediatric patients is also correlated with interpersonal interactions within the family.[16].

Schedule: pharmaceutical adherence is also influenced by the timing and length of pharmaceutical administration. Doses given in the middle of the day may be difficult for school-age children to take, leading to missed doses. As the frequency of prescription doses rises, adherence rates fall. According to estimates, the typical adherence rates for twice-daily and four-times-daily doses are 70% and 20%, respectively.[7]. Patients may find it difficult to remember to take prescription drugs that require several daily dosages or that must be taken at specific times of the day, such as before meals or at night. Doses may be skipped or delayed due to hectic school schedules, extracurricular activities, and family obligations. For instance, a child with asthma who needs to use an inhaler during school hours can have trouble getting to or remembering to take their prescription. Consistent drug administration may be difficult for parents or caregivers with demanding jobs or erratic work schedules. Families with additional caregiving obligations or single-parent households may experience an increase in the load.

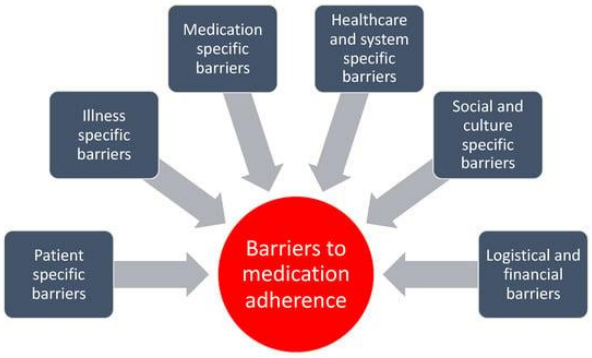

Figure 2: barriers to pediatric adherence in chronic diseases

Taste/Formulation: Children's medications are available in a range of formulations, such as topicals, liquids, solids, powders, and suspensions. The adherence of these formulations is affected. Oral drugs may cause children to object to their taste, smell, aftertaste, or even texture [18]. According to retrospective research, pharmaceuticals with poor palatability had a detrimental effect on adherence, whereas those with good palatability had a beneficial effect. Children may spit or vomit out the preparation, or they may be unwilling to take pills that taste terrible.[8]. Because the youngster is not taking the entire recommended dosage, this frequently leads to inappropriate medication use. Poor health consequences may result from this.[12].

Table 1: Factors affecting pediatric adherence in chronic diseases

	Component		
	1	**2**	**3**
Age and developmental stage	.903		
Cognitive and emotional maturity	.841		
Health literacy	.817		
Health literacy	.794	.475	
Self-efficacy	.663	.484	
Parental involvement and support	.638		
Family dynamics and communication	.627	.585	
Socioeconomic status		.980	
Disease severity and symptoms		.895	
Treatment complexity			.907
Disease duration		.521	.525
Healthcare provider-patient relationship		.794	.475
Communication and education		.663	.484
Access to care and resources		.638	
School and social activities		.627	.585
Stigma and social support	.903		
Cultural and linguistic factors:	.841		
Mobile health applications	.817		
Reminder systems	.903		
Telehealth services	.841		
pediatric adherence			

The findings of this research provide important information to take into account while evaluating remedial dynamics for children experiencing their first episode of idiopathic nephrotic disease. Many pediatric nephrologists are reluctant to adopt delayed treatment practices despite evidence that extending the duration of steroid exposure can reduce the incidence of backslides. This is partly due to the subsequent occurrence of social problems with expanded pharmacological treatment.

Present study was carried to find out the effect of chronic illness on behavior, intelligence and memory function in children. 389 children between the ages of 0 and 14 who had both epilepsy and nephrotic disease were included in the review. They were enrolled at Banaras Hindu College in Varanasi from the Pediatric Nephrology and Epilepsy Specialty Facilities, Branch of Pediatrics, Foundation of Clinical Sciences. As shown in figure 3-7, 157 other normal, healthy children who went to the short-term division for a routine wellness examination were selected as controls.

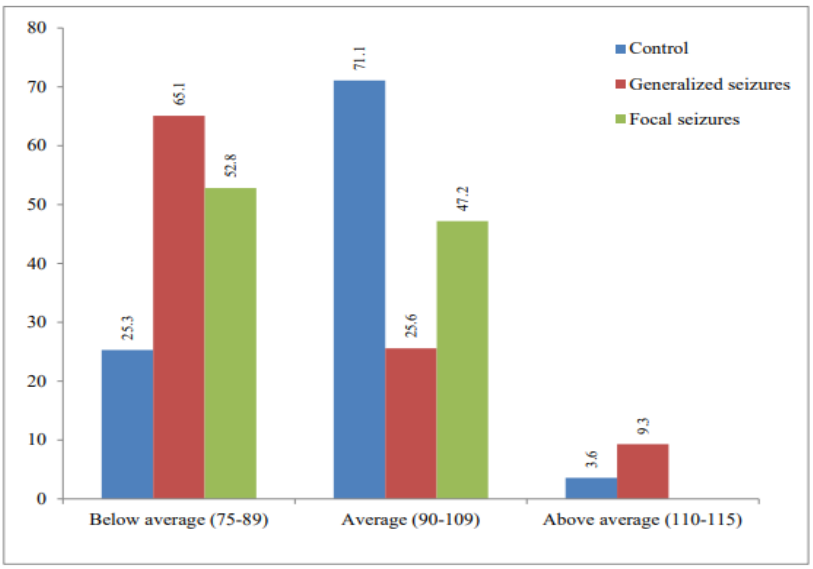

Figure 3: Percentage distribution of children with epilepsy in different ranges (5-14 years)

It's unclear exactly how prednisolone causes societal changes. Hippocampal damage has received a lot of attention as a possible cause of these adverse effects. As a component of the limbic system, the hippocampus is well-known in the theory of feelings.

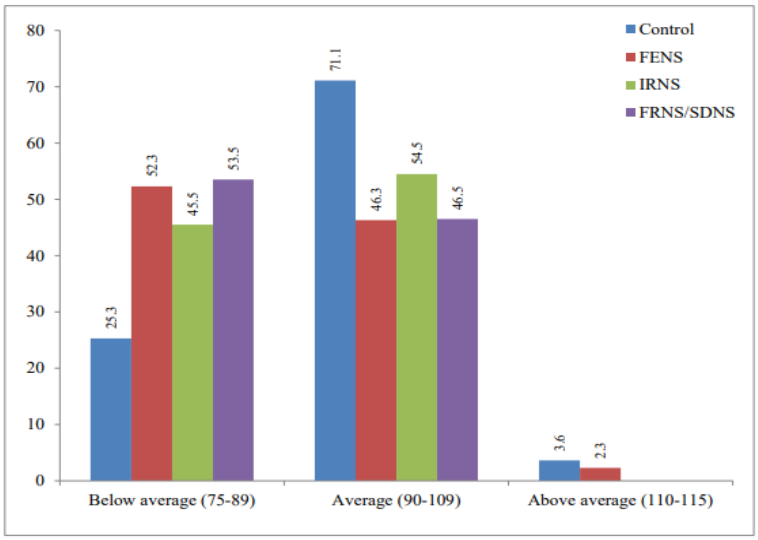

Figure 4: Percentage distribution of children with nephrotic syndrome in different ranges (2-5 years)

According to exploratory studies, the negative effects of steroids on mental functions (memory and learning) may be related to responsive gliosis and neuronal degeneration in areas of the brain related to these abilities. The idea that the portion reaction relationship with regard to the neuropsychological results of steroids is far from direct and individual expectations is beyond the realm of possibilities is supported by the recently disclosed findings as well as the wide range of serious social irregularities observed in the offspring of our companion receiving a uniform combined portion of prednisone.

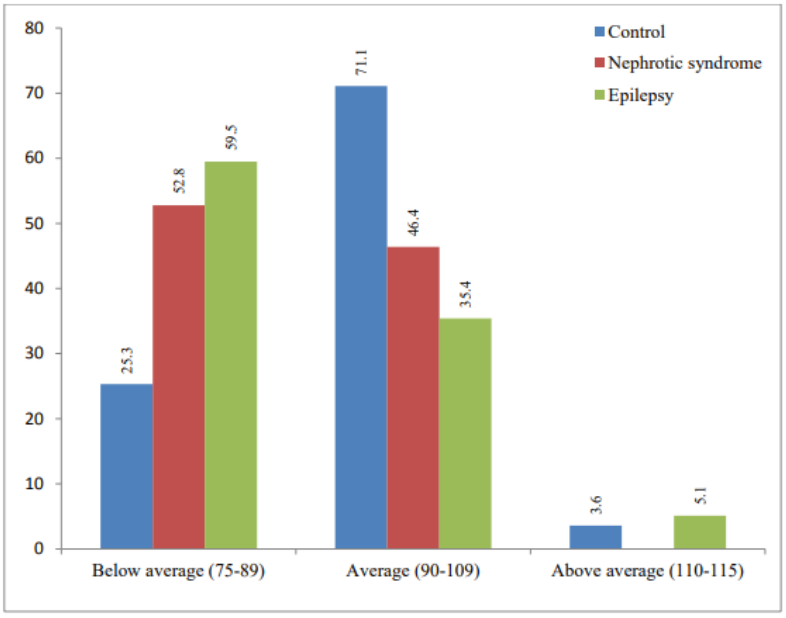

Figure 5: Percentage distribution of children in study groups in different range of (2-5 years)

Numerous factors, such as the child's perception of the illness situation, the extent of long-term changes in body habitus, and the responses of the child's parents, relatives, and friends to their condition, may most likely have a substantial impact on the child's behavior during the illness.

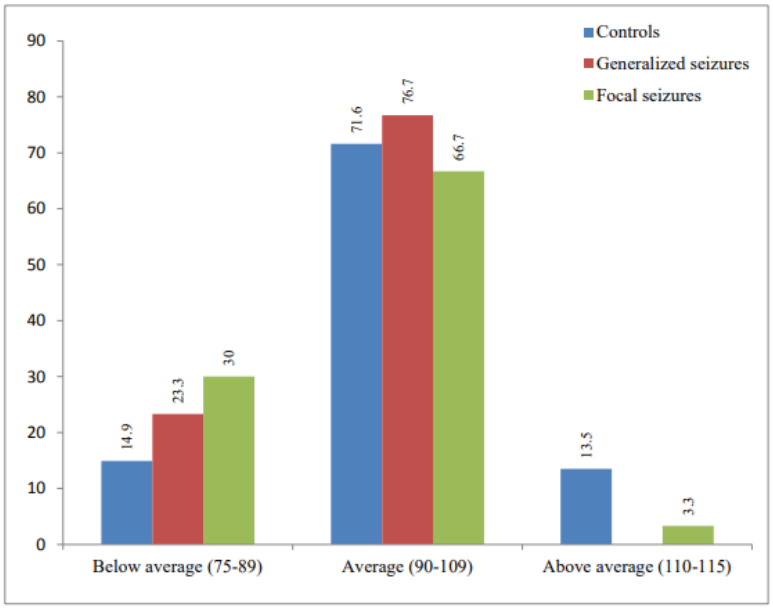

Figure 6: Percentage distribution of children with epilepsy in different ranges (2-5 years)

Thus, this study revealed that children undergoing the steroid therapy and antiepileptic drugs should be regularly screened for behavior problems such as depression, anxiety, aggression and hyperactivity etc. Unfortunately, problems are often overlooked or examination or care is unavailable. Assessing and treating infections as well as mental and social problems should be the main goals of a large facility.[13]. Those exhibiting egregious behavioral abnormalities should be referred to a therapist or analyst for further assistance. The executives' involvement in the disease should also include close collaboration with the family and appropriate guidance.

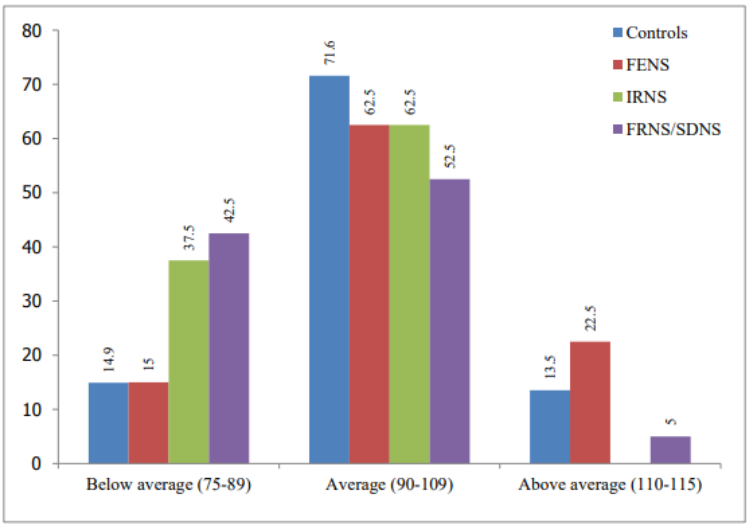

Figure 7: Percentage distribution of children with nephrotic syndrome in different ranges (5-14 years)

The strength of the study is the use of a standardized validated measurement tool, applied on a relatively larger sample size in two age groups of population. There are several obstacles to the current evaluation. Our findings rely solely on parent-detailed conduct complaints, which somewhat restricts how broadly the results may be applied. Furthermore, this study may have been underpowered to identify more subtle behavioral changes because it uses a somewhat larger sample size of mental assessments of children with epilepsy and idiopathic nephrotic disease. Finally, our review's design did not include any follow-up evaluations to document the side effect goal's time course following medication discontinuation. In light of the findings of this review, this problem would undoubtedly be an intriguing one to tentatively examine.

4. CONCLUSION

In terms of results and expenses, pediatric drug adherence is a significant problem for the healthcare system. Medication adherence in juvenile patients can be improved in a number of ways, such as through personalized counseling, streamlined regimens, technology utilization, and taste-enhancing techniques. Medication adherence is more likely when medication is taken at the same time each day since it decreases forgetfulness. For instance, a lot of parents choose to give their children their medication with breakfast or dinner. It can also be a good idea to include dosing before the youngster bathes or brushes their teeth. As medication experts, pharmacists should be involved in educating children and families about medications to reduce this nationwide problem. By creating a collaborative partnership with the family members and understanding their particular needs, pharmacists can help to address barriers to adherence and suggest ways to resolve them. Medication non-adherence is related to increased health care use in children and adolescents who have a chronic medical condition and should be addressed in clinical care. Future studies should include randomized controlled trials examining the impact of adherence promotion efforts on health care use and costs.

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