

A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted in 2012 to describe the knowledge and compliance of universal precautions among medical doctors and nurses at Yangon Orthopaedic Hospital (YOH), a group with a high daily index of exposure to blood and body fluids. Data was collected through Pre-tested structured questionnaires from the 91 respondents, 26 medical doctors (28.6%) and 65 nurses (71.4%), and they were interviewed regarding their knowledge and compliance towards universal precautions.

From the 91 study subjects, 68.1 percent of the respondents were very knowledgeable of universal precautions. For 50.5 percent of the participants, the source of information about universal precautions was formal lecture on training/ School/ University while other respondents knew from various sources. Regarding knowledge on the most common risk for occupational exposure, majority (82.4 percent) knew that needle stick injury as the most common risk factor for occupational exposure. With respect to knowledge about hand washing, 98.9 percent of respondents knew hand should be washed before and after handling a patient, and wearing gloves. Majority of the respondents (95.6 percent) knew the agent for major blood borne infections while almost all the respondents knew the modes of transmission for major blood borne infections. A common misconception among the respondents (45.1 percent) about recapping needle was needle should be recap or bent after use.

According to this study, more than half of the respondents (62.6 percent) had high compliance score. Total 67 percent respondents were vaccinated against hepatitis B virus but only 35.2 percent knew their antibody titers. It was alarming to note that significantly large proportion of respondents (89 percent) recapped the needle after use and more than half of respondents (64.8 percent) had experience of needle stick injury. Among responders only 42.9 percent always washed hand before handling with patients and 72.5 percent always wash their hand after handling with patients.

There was good compliance for using gloves (100 percent), gowns (98.9 percent) and mask (100 percent) in high risk procedure. The most neglected personal protective equipment in high risk procedure were aprons (47.3 percent), eye wear (20.9 percent) and boots (28.6 percent). Rationale for lack of compliance with universal precautions elicited by the questionnaire included not availability of resources (45 percent), time constraints (34 percent), presumption that patient as not infected (8.8 percent), do not considered themselves at risk (8.8 percent) and not necessary (3 percent) respectively.

In this study, 81.3 percent of respondents mentioned that soap and water were available to them. Moreover, 71.4 percent and 87.9 percent also reported the same for availability of gloves and puncture resistance containers. But, there was no significant association between availability of resources and compliance of universal precautions.