

**TREATMENT SEEKING BEHAVIOUR FOR
MALARIA AMONG THE MIGRANTS IN
SHWEGYIN TOWNSHIP, BAGO REGION**

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ABSTRACT

A cross sectional descriptive study was conducted with the objective of identifying the treatment seeking behaviours for malaria and its related factors among the migrant population in Shwegyin Township, Bago Region. A total of 250 migrants who had history of fever with chills and rigor with or without confirmation by laboratory were interviewed with pretested semi-structured questionnaires. Data collection was carried out in Mid October, 2013. Collected data were analyzed by using SPSS version 16.0. The statistical analysis was carried out by the chi-square test; a p-value of less than 0.05 was considered to be statistically significant.

In the present study, 92.0% of the migrants had low knowledge and only 8.0% had high knowledge level about malaria transmission, symptoms, complications, and prevention methods and drugs resistance. About 70% knew the malaria transmission of mosquito biting however, low knowledge on the malaria vector breeding sites, common biting time and effectiveness of ITN/LLIN. It was found out that ($p > 0.05$), the education level and knowledge on malaria were not significantly associated.

The result of study showed that only 28.4% of the migrants sought treatment from health services and general practitioners. A larger proportion of the migrants (71.6%) sought treatment from quacks, drug sellers and self medication. Among the 250 migrants, only 20% of the migrants took treatment within 24 hours at health services. Reason for not going health services initially was mainly due to perceive as the malaria symptoms were not serious and they did not have perceived threat. There was no statistically significant association with knowledge on malaria and proper treatment seeking behavior ($p > 0.05$). Although they had high knowledge on malaria, they had no accessible health center and could not seek treatment within 24 hours from onset of fever. Moreover, they had transportation problem especially in rainy season, the roads were too bad to pass the mountainous area with difficulty and there was no public transportation. It was found out that whatever they sought treatment at initial stage nearby all of them, the last treatment seeking was in public health facilities.

There was significant association between proper treatment seeking and travel time to get health services ($X^2 = 5.886$, $p = 0.015$), and transportation (easy and difficult) to health center ($X^2 = 6.791$, $p = 0.009$). There was also significant association between time taking from proper treatment from the onset of fever and the distance to the nearest health facility ($X^2 = 6.916$, $p = 0.032$).

It was concluded that health education about malaria should be intensified to reduce the incorrect knowledge and encourage the migrants to seek treatment with health care providers within 24 hours.