

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PERCEPTION
OF COMMUNITY PHARMACIST TOWARDS
PATIENTS' SAFETY WITH OTC MEDICATIONS
IN MELAKA AND NEGERI SEMBILAN**

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TABLE OF CONTENT

	Page
TITLE PAGE	
APPROVAL	
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	i
TABLE OF CONTENTS	ii
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURE	iv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	v
ABSTRACT	vi
CHAPTER ONE (INTRODUCTION)	
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Objectives	2
1.2 Problem Statement	3
1.3 Hypothesis	3
1.4 Significance of Study	3
CHAPTER TWO (LITERATURE REVIEW)	
2.0 Introduction	4
2.1 Over-the-Counter (OTC) Medicines	4
2.2 Knowledge of Community Pharmacists on OTC Medications	6
2.3 Attitudes of Community Pharmacists on OTC Medications	8
2.4 Perception of Community Pharmacists on OTC Medications	10
2.5 Safety Issues of OTC Medicines	13
2.6 Communication on OTC medicines	16
CHAPTER THREE (METHODOLOGY)	
3.1 Sample Population	18

ABSTRACT

The recent increase in numbers of OTC drugs in Malaysia has great impact on the trend of self-medication in Malaysia. Consumers that usually go to the community pharmacies tend to have high possibility of self medicating. Pharmacists play a vital role in providing information to the consumers so that they will use the medication safely. Therefore, this study is conducted to explore the current knowledge, attitude and perception of community pharmacist towards patients' safety with OTC medications. A cross sectional survey was conducted at Melaka and Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia. The questionnaire consisted of four sections, which are demographic, knowledge, attitude and perception of community pharmacists towards patients' safety with OTC medications. 100 respondents successfully answered the questions. Almost all of the respondents have higher level of knowledge towards OTC medications consumption among the consumers with a mean value of knowledge score of 92.88%. They also have good attitudes when they agree that patients need to be reminded to read the label again before taking OTC medicines. On the other hand, the respondents did not agree to dispense the medicines based on price. Based on perception, majority of the respondents agree that OTC medicines do not cause any harmful to the patients if they use in proper way. Moreover, majority of them did not agree when it states that information about OTC medicines from only one source is good enough. Community pharmacists must be equipped with sufficient knowledge and information in order to advice or counsel the patients. Therefore, various information resources are very crucial. In conclusion, knowledge, attitude and perception (KAP) of community pharmacists play an important role towards educating patients on safety issues related to OTC medications.

Keywords: Self-medication, Over-the-Counter (OTC) medications, Knowledge, attitude and perception (KAP) of Community Pharmacists, Patient Safety.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

According to the Food and Drug Administration Authority (FDA), Over-the-counter (OTC) medicine is also known as non-prescription medicine. All these terms refer to medicine that can be purchased without a prescription. They are safe and effective when the patients follow the directions on the label and as directed by their health care professional (Food and Drug Administration). OTC medicines have been used traditionally to treat minor ailments. This scenario is changing as more and more of prescription medicines are legally dispensed as OTC medicines. In fact, the American Pharmaceutical Association reports that there have been 700 prescription-to-OTC medication switches to date. As the public becomes more informed about self-medication, this might affect the range and availability of OTC medications in the future.

Similar to other treatment interventions, OTC medicines also have their own benefits and risks. Potential benefits to the public include enabling people to take control of their own illnesses instead of rapidly seeking access to treatments. In addition, they can save cost on their treatment without seeking for the doctors. Potential risks include overdose and the possible misuse of certain medicines (Wazaify, Shields, Hughes, & McElney, 2005). For example, taking OTC in an excess amount or