Changing Lives with Papaya: An alternative therapy for intestinal worm treatment and prevention
Kathy Taylor RN, BSN, Staff Nurse, Truman Lakewood Medical Center
Jeana Wilcox PhD, RN, CNS, Assistant Professor of Nursing, Graceland University

Introduction

Jamaica’s failure to meet the five performance criteria set by the WHO (2000) has presented an opportunity for health education of its people by medical mission groups. Intestinal worms are a rampant problem in tropical Jamaica.

Objectives

This ongoing project provides student nurses an opportunity to apply patient education skills and cultural awareness issues in a mission nursing environment.

This project provides education to patients at the Falmouth Jamaica clinic in an effort to introduce the indigenous papaya as an alternative to antihelminth pharmaceuticals for the treatment of intestinal worms. The goal of the project is to reduce worm infestation in individuals adhering to proper and routine worming methods.

Methods

- Educational slide presentation to nursing students preparing to attend a medical mission trip to Falmouth Jamaica.
- The educational slide presentation covered storage, administration, and record keeping methods the students would be teaching Jamaican patients (Kemp & Roberts, 2000).

Process

- One-on-one and group teaching sessions were administered by junior and senior level nursing students on the front porch of the clinic while patients waited to be seen by the physician.
- Topics covered in the teaching included seed preparation, storage and dosage.
- Patients were then asked to restate the instructions they had received to ensure proper understanding of the technique.
- Documentation of the teaching was made in each patient’s chart (docket).
- Presentation of information was made to children at the Falmouth All Age School.

In 2008, approximately 300 Jamaican patients were educated about the process and effectiveness of papaya seed as an alternative method of treating intestinal worms.

Nursing students had an opportunity to apply culturally appropriate patient education skills in a mission nursing environment.

Observations of the students confirmed the ability of the Jamaican patients to accurately restate the presented information.

During the June 2008 follow-up trip, educated patients were asked about their experiences with the alternative methods of worming with papaya. Several patients reported telling friends and relatives about the method and requested more brochures to share with others.

The students used community nursing methods to assess the educational needs of the community and adapt teaching methods for effective implementation of the papaya teaching project.

Results

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Conclusion

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Future Work

Data collection and teaching will continue during future medical mission trips to Jamaica. The yearly winter trip for Graceland University students will continue to be a source of teaching opportunities and data collection.

References


