

**COMPLIANCE WITH DOTS AMONG TB PATIENTS
UNDER COMMUNITY BASED DOTS STRATEGY
IN PALPA DISTRICT, NEPAL**

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ABSTRACT

Directly Observed Treatment Short-course (DOTS) is a method that encourages tuberculosis (TB) patients to take their medicine under the direct supervision of a daily observer according to the schedule. The aim of this cross-sectional study was to describe and identify the relationship between patients' compliance and their socio-demographic characteristics, knowledge and perception toward TB and Community Based DOTS program, availability and accessibility of its services and social supports. The data was collected from 101 registered TB patients in Palpa district, Nepal, during 1st Jul. to 31st Dec. 2004 by using a self administered questionnaire.

It was revealed that 61.39% of the patients followed the treatment procedure strictly and more than one-third of noncompliant patients interrupted their treatment due to side effects of TB drugs. The majority of the respondents were 15-34 yrs. old, male, married, secondary and over level in education, farmers, and with low family income. Two-fifths of them had high knowledge level and more than half of them had moderate perception level toward the disease and its treatment. Most of them agreed that TB drugs, health education and daily observers were available to them. Nearly two thirds of them got drugs within 15 minutes. A half of them had appropriate time in the morning to take the drugs and two-fifths of them found it easiest to get information from a health worker. Nearly three-fourths of them received a high level of social support.

It was shown that age group, family income, knowledge level, availability and accessibility of the services were associated with patient compliance. Furthermore overall perception, perception on susceptibility, severity and benefit were significantly different for the compliant status as were overall social support, social supports from family and health workers/community health volunteers, mental and informational supports. All of these had associations at p-value <0.05.

The findings reveal the urgent need to revise the content of health communication, emphasize side effects of the drugs, causes and preventive measurement of the disease. The readiness of daily observers to provide services will contribute positively to the continuation of drug intake.

**KEY WORDS: COMPLIANCE / COMMUNITY BASED DOTS / TUBERCULOSIS
/DOTS**

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