

Alternative Medicine Methods Used by Teenagers with COVID-19 Positivity

COVID-19 Pozitifliği Olan Gençlerin Kullandığı Alternatif Tıp Yöntemleri

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ABSTRACT

Aim: This study was conducted to determine the alternative medicine methods used by teenagers with COVID-19 Positivity.

Method: The sample consisted of teenagers with COVID-19 positivity (n=35) who voluntarily wanted to participate in the research.

Findings: Data in the research is given under one main theme headings; 1-Theme: Alternative Medicine Methods in COVID -19. The alternative medicine methods used by the participants are as follows; vitamins C and D, green tea, ginger, cinnamon, fennel, mint-lemon tea, honey milk, sumac, chicken broth, thyme oil, warm water with lemon, Taking a shower two or three times a day, thyme tea, propolis, garlic juice, garlic yogurt, homemade kefir, bony meat broth, sage tea, olive leaf tea, collard greens, honey.

Results: In this study, alternative medicine methods used by teenagers of COVID-19 positive were revealed.

Keywords: COVID-19 positivity, teenagers, alternative medicine methods

ÖZ

Amaç: Bu çalışma, COVID-19 Pozitifliği olan gençlerin kullandığı alternatif tıp yöntemlerini belirlemek amacıyla yapılmıştır.

Yöntem: Örneklemi, araştırmaya gönüllü olarak katılmak isteyen COVID-19 pozitifliği (n=35) olan gençlerden oluşturulmuştur.

Bulgular: Araştırmada veriler tek bir ana tema başlığı altında verilmektedir; 1-Tema: COVID -19'da Alternatif Tıp Yöntemleri. Katılımcıların kullandığı alternatif tıp yöntemleri şu şekildedir; C ve D vitaminleri, yeşil çay, zencefil, tarçın, rezene, nane-limon çayı, balı süt, sumak, tavuk suyu, kekik yağı, limonlu ılık su, Günde iki veya üç kez duş almak, kekik çayı , propolis, sarımsak suyu, sarımsaklı yoğurt, ev yapımı kefir, kemikli et suyu, ada çayı, zeytin yaprağı çayı, karalahana, bal.

Sonuç: Bu çalışmada, COVID-19 pozitifliği olan gençlerin kullandığı alternatif tıp yöntemleri ortaya konulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: COVID-19 pozitifliği, gençler, alternatif tıp yöntemleri

Introduction

COVID-19, which emerges in China and causes pandemic by spreading all over the world, causes severe acute respiratory infections, asymptomatic, mild or severe symptomatic. It is also spreading very rapidly (1-3).

Outbreaks that remind people of the reality of death can affect people's psychological health quite negatively. Factors such as the necessity of staying at home continuously to protect against the epidemic, a decrease in social relations, when the epidemic process will end or what the conditions that affect this process may not be known. In all these situations, it can cause anxiety and fear in people (4).

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Gönderim Tarihi:24.11.21 - Kabul Tarihi: 08.03.2023

Unfortunately, all the measures taken after this serious epidemic have been desperate and the death rates continue to increase. The data available to scientists about this virus is limited. In addition, a COVID-19 patient is thought to infect an average of 2.6 people (5). It is stated that teenagers play a more role in the spread of COVID-19, which is effective not only in the elderly population but also in all age groups. Although it is thought that teenagers overcome this disease slightly, new data do not confirm this situation. In fact, the views of some experts are that in the future, teenagers will be more severely affected by COVID -19 (6-8). In addition, the opinion that teenagers experience COVID-19 without symptoms or overcome it mildly, unfortunately, caused this age group to be underestimated and no evaluated. However, nowadays, COVID-19 positivity has started to be seen frequently in teenagers, and it has been reported by the cases interviewed

that they experience severe symptoms. During the COVID-19 pandemic, people have also started to use alternative methods to protect their children due to the inadequacy of treatment and prevention methods (9). However, the use of alternative medicine methods (AMM) especially in children and teenagers who are considered to be vulnerable groups is important and it requires expertise (10). According to the Ministry of Health Directive of the Republic of Turkey, AMM application is limited to the persons specified in this regulation. AMM practices within the scope of the regulation include; massage and yoga can be applied by nurses; Reflexology, music therapy and aromatherapy applications can be applied under the supervision of a doctor (11). In addition, it is reported in the literature that AMM methods to be applied by the determined nurses are similar to nursing practices (12). Nurses can safely implement and control these practices. However, it is necessary to control and monitor the AMM applications to be made wrong. Therefore, this study was conducted to determine the alternative medicine methods used by teenagers with COVID-19 Positivity.

Questions of Research

1. What are the alternative medicine methods used by teenagers with COVID-19 positivity for treatment?

Design and Method

Population and Sample of Research

The research is a qualitative research with phenomenological pattern. Data were collected by observation and interview method. The research was conducted between October 25 and November 30, 2021. All teenagers in a school made up the universe. Sample selection was not made. All teenagers who volunteered to participate in the study with COVID-19 positivity (Positive PCR test) during the study period at the school were included in the sample (n=35).

Application of Research

The research was carried out in a 15-day period in a school where teenagers aged 13-18 were present, during a period when schools provided

face-to-face education. In order to collect the data, a question and interview form created on the internet were shared with the young people. In addition, communication with students through social media was maintained throughout the research. In the group formed in the social media environment, the students were given comprehensive information about the research and they were told how to fill in the shared interview form. Interviews were provided by video interviews with students.

The data were collected with the question and interview form explained below;

Question form; It is the form containing demographic information and questions about COVID-19.

Interview form; It is a form that includes open-ended questions that require interpretation regarding problems that teenagers may experience in COVID-19 positivity. The questions are listed below.

Question of Interview

1. Have you used a traditional method in treating COVID -19/ how you used a traditional method?

Analysis of the Research

Before starting the research, a student who was positive for COVID-19 was interviewed about their covid-19 experiences, and the topics to be discussed in the research were determined. Later, data were collected with a question and interview form prepared for teenagers via social media. The questions were created by focusing on the COVID-19 experiences of individuals and interpreting the problems of teenagers on this issue. While performing the descriptive analysis of the research, each statement of the participants was examined line by line. Expression disorders in terms of language are arranged. Then, the comments of the first participant were evaluated and associated with the statements of the other participants, and notes were taken for the themes of the research. The sentences required for themes among the embedded sentences were analyzed

within a framework. Then, the themes were read again and the appropriateness of the sentences of the participants and the relationship between themes was examined. Similar or inappropriate sentences in the themes were removed. These themes were made separately for each participant, and at the end, the notes created and received for the participants were evaluated and reported.

Reliability and Credibility

For reliability and credibility, participant confirmation and peer debriefing technique was used. After compiling the first codes, the opinions of the participants were verified by the participants for the accuracy of the codes and comments, and if the codes contradicted the participants' comments, the codes were corrected accordingly. The peer debriefing method was carried out by experts in the qualitative research field. The evaluation of the experts' comments for reliability was carried out with the intercoder reliability suggested by Miles and Huberman(13). The experts were asked to examine the data by giving information about the study and the results achieved by the study. After an agreement was reached on the themes selected in line with the analysis and suggestions of the space, they were organized into categories and subcategories. According to the answers given by the experts to the codes, the reliability between the coders was 92%.

Ethical Procedure of Research

Ethics committee approval of Research was obtained from the ethics committee of a university. All participants in the research were informed about the research and were included in the research according to their own wishes. In addition, consent was obtained from the parents of the students. The research was carried out in accordance with the Helsinki Declaration principles.

Findings

It was determined that the majority of the teenagers (62.8%) were between the ages of 13-18 participating in the research. It was determined that most of the teenagers (77.2%) did not work. The majority of the teenagers stated that they

adapted to the use of masks (94.3%) and to social distance (54.3%). It was determined that the rate of COVID-19 positivity in family members of teenagers was 65.7%. It was determined that COVID-19 transmission to teenagers was mostly (52.9%) from families, the majority of teenagers did not have a chronic additional disease (100%) and had the COVID-19 process at home (85.7%) (Table 1).

Table 1. Teenagers' Demographic and COVID-19 Information, Kilis-2021

Age	n=35	%
13-14 age	13	37.2
15-18 age	22	62.8
Working status		
Only Student	27	77.2
I started working when schools were on holiday in the pandemic	8	22.8
Compliance with mask use		
I use it regularly	33	94.3
Sometimes I don't mind	2	5.7
Compliance with social distance		
I use it regularly	19	54.3
I don't fit at all	16	45.7
Covid-19 positivity in family members other than you		
Yes	23	65.7
No	12	34.3
Covid-19 transmission person/object		
Family (mother, father, sibling)	19	52.9
Others (relative, neighbor, friend, deliveryman, tourist, at funeral)	16	47.1
Hospitalization due to COVID-19		
Yes	5	14.3
No	30	85.7

I-Thema: Traditional Treatment in Covid-19

All participants stated that they used an alternative medicine method; Alternative medicine methods used by the participants are presented in detail in Table 2 (Table 2).

Table 2. Alternative Medicine Methods used by Teenagers with COVID-19 Positivity, Kilis-2021

* Alternative Medicine Methods	n=35	%
Vitamins C and D	8	22.8
Green tea	9	25.7
ginger	6	17.1
Cinnamon	16	45.7
Fennel	3	8.5
Mint-lemon tea	22	62.8
Honey milk	23	65.7
Sumac	9	25.7
Chicken broth	11	31.4
Thyme oil	7	20.0
Warm water with lemon	2	5.7
Taking a shower two or three times a day	3	8.5
Thyme tea	6	17.1
Propolis	2	5.7
Garlic juice	23	65.7
Garlic yogurt	9	25.7
Homemade kefir	7	20.0
Bony meat broth	1	2.8
Sage tea	6	17.1
Olive leaf tea	11	31.4
Collard greens	7	20.0
Honey	6	17.1
Mixture of honey and ginger	11	31.4

*** Multiple answers given.**

In addition, interesting comments from the participants about using alternative medicine methods are given below. Since the expressions of the participants are similar below and some of the participants' answers are short, beautiful and interesting sentences are chosen and presented.

"I felt a rotten onion smell that started 7 days after I tested positive for COVID-19 and lasted for 10 days. everything smelled like rotten onions I couldn't eat. A friend of mine suggested that I use thyme oil. After use thyme oil, I could eat my food comfortably. I poured thyme oil on granulated sugar and ate it."(Participant 1).

"I exercised a lot. I drank mint-lemon tea and ate oranges. I used vitamins C and D as separate supplements "(Participant 4).

"I consumed lots of vitamin C foods. I also drank sage every day because it was good for my joint

pains "(Participant 5).

"I consumed green tea, ginger, cinnamon, fennel, mint-lemon tea "(Participant 7).

"I consumed honey milk, sumac and chicken broth (Participant 10).

"Taking a shower two or three times a day was good for muscle pains, it relaxed. I also felt like I was getting rid of the viruses on me. I also drank warm water with lemon to clean the dirt from my throat. I drank linden it calmed me down and relaxed "(Participant 11).

"The drugs given for treatment had many side effects and were not reliable. That's why we didn't use any of them. We mostly consumed thyme net, thyme tea, propolis, garlic juice, warm water with lemon"(Participant 15).

"I have never used medicines, I usually consumed lemon water; garlic yogurt, homemade kefir, and broth. I drank lots of water and took a bath "(Participant 19).

"I consumed thyme tea, sage tea and olive leaf tea (Participant 21).

"I needed an undisclosed amount of water consumption, I drank plenty of water. I ate foods containing vitamin C. I ate garlic yogurt. Also, collard greens were good for my joint pains so I ate this salad every day "(Participant 23).

"I consumed cumin, mint, chamomile tea, thyme oil, sumac" (Participant 34).

"I ate honey all the time before going to bed. It's good for my throat. I also mixed honey with thyme and ate it. Ayrıca, I made a mixture of honey and ginger and ate it three times a day"(Participant 35).

Results

AMM, which is frequently used in our country, has been a healing method for protection from COVID-19 and treatment of COVID-19. The lack of a clear treatment method for COVID-19, which caused a serious epidemic, and the lack of safe results in vaccine studies

supported this situation (14). In addition, there are publications in the literature showing that traditional Chinese medicine has been tried in the treatment of COVID-19 (15,16). However, misuse of AMM, which is known to cause serious complications in children and teenagers, is quite common. Therefore, this study was conducted to determine the alternative medicine methods used by teenagers with COVID-19 Positivity. All participants stated that they used an alternative medicine method in this study. The alternative medicine methods used by the participants are as follows; vitamins C and D, green tea, ginger, cinnamon, fennel, mint-lemon tea, honey milk, sumac, chicken broth, thyme oil, thyme oil, warm water with lemon, Taking a shower two or three times a day, thyme tea, propolis, garlic juice, garlic yogurt, homemade kefir, bony meat broth, sage tea, olive leaf tea, collard greens, honey.

It is reported that frequently used traditional alternative medicine methods are also tried in the treatment of covid-19. Furthermore, laden type having traditional use in Turkey (*Cistus* spp.), Some thyme species (*Origanum*, *Thymus* and *Thymbra*), licorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra* L.) and olive leaf (*Olea europea* L.) plant species and resulting therefrom It was stated that the bioactive compounds to be used as natural therapeutics in the fight against coronavirus infections could potentially be used (17,9). In addition, traditional treatment methods have been widely used in bronchial asthma, epilepsy, and upper respiratory system diseases (18). They have used traditional alternative medicine methods, which are frequently used in our country, in the treatment of covid-19 in our youth. All of the youth stated that they used a traditional method. The fact that a clear drug treatment procedure has not yet been developed for covid-19 and the frequent use of these methods in our country may have pushed teenagers to use traditional treatment methods in this process.

In addition, it was determined in the study that the majority of teenagers comply with the use of masks and pay attention to the social distance rule. This result shows us that young people have knowledge about this issue and adapt to

the pandemic conditions. Controlling diseases is related to the way the disease is perceived, the reactions shown and the way of adaptation to the disease. It has been observed that the epidemic is brought under control faster in communities that perceive the disease faster and comply with the measures (19,20). For this reason, it can be said that teenagers show a useful approach in controlling the epidemic in our country.

Additional results from the study are as follows. It was determined that the family members of the teenagers had a positive rate of COVID-19. It was determined that the transmission of COVID-19 to teenagers was mostly from families. It is now known to everyone that COVID-19 is transmitted through close contact. These results in our study confirm this situation. Those who have COVID-19 positivity in themselves and their family members have become COVID-19. In addition, it was determined that not all of the teenagers had an additional chronic disease and that the majority of them spent the COVID-19 process at home. It was thought that this situation resulted from the absence of an additional chronic disease in teenagers. As it is known, the course of COVID-19 is quite heavy in individuals with chronic diseases. However, it is a thought-provoking and frightening result that there are teenagers who have been hospitalized even though they do not have any additional chronic diseases.

Conclusion

In this study, alternative medicine methods used by teenagers were revealed and some suggestions that could be used to treat the symptoms of COVID-19 and itself were put forward. However, the correct management of these methods to be used is as important as the treatment of COVID-19. For this reason, it can be said that alternative medicine methods can be beneficial in eliminating and treating the symptoms of COVID-19 under the control of experts who are familiar with the use of alternative medicine methods. In addition, some alternative medicine methods used by Teenagers may be beneficial in the production of drugs to be used in the treatment of COVID-19. However,

a fact that should not be forgotten is that the uncontrolled use of alternative medicine methods can have fatal results.

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