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### A Review on the Health Impact of Self-medication for Malaria on Port Harcourt Residents

*Une revue de l'impact de l'automédication pour le paludisme sur la santé des habitants de Port Harcourt*

<sup>1</sup>\*C. Chinah, <sup>1</sup>R. Irons

#### ABSTRACT

Self-medication is a widespread public health issue that has continued to grow without ever reaching a level, both in wealthy and underdeveloped countries. Residents of Port Harcourt, Nigeria, have faced danger to their health from malaria, and because they have limited access to healthcare, the majority of them turn to self-medication to treat the disease. The study's goal was to ascertain how well-informed Port Harcourt citizens were of the negative effects of self-medication for malaria on their health. Self-medication was a common practice among the research population. However, their understanding of how self-medication for malaria affects health is not particularly strong. The findings and explanations show that this is reflected in their attitude and behavior regarding self-medicating behaviors. The vast majority of people think they can treat their cases of malaria by using symptoms, prior experiences, and a suitable diagnostic laboratory test to confirm the disease. The two biggest causes of self-medication were low income and a lack of health insurance, while other minor factors included a lack of healthcare facilities, high medicine prices, an inability to pay for medical bills, being near a hospital, and having a negative attitude towards physicians. The findings show that self-medication is continuing to rise and that it will continue to have an influence on malaria prevention and treatment in the study region unless the government and other people in positions of authority do something about it. **WAJM 2023; 40(10); 1118-1130.**

**Keywords:** Attitude and behaviour, Lack of health insurance, Low income, Public health,

#### RÉSUMÉ

L'automédication est un problème de santé publique répandu qui n'a cessé de croître, tant dans les pays riches que dans les pays en développement. Les habitants de Port Harcourt, au Nigeria, sont confrontés à un danger pour leur santé en raison du paludisme et, en raison de leur accès limité aux soins de santé, la majorité d'entre eux ont recours à l'automédication pour traiter la maladie. L'objectif de l'étude était de déterminer dans quelle mesure les habitants de Port Harcourt étaient informés des effets négatifs de l'automédication pour le paludisme sur leur santé. L'automédication était une pratique courante parmi la population étudiée. Cependant, leur compréhension de la manière dont l'automédication pour le paludisme affecte la santé n'est pas particulièrement solide. Les résultats et les explications montrent que cela se reflète dans leur attitude et leur comportement en ce qui concerne les comportements d'automédication. La grande majorité des personnes pensent qu'elles peuvent traiter leurs cas de paludisme en utilisant les symptômes, les expériences antérieures et un test de laboratoire de diagnostic approprié pour confirmer la maladie. Les deux principales causes de l'automédication étaient le faible revenu et le manque d'assurance maladie, tandis que d'autres facteurs mineurs comprenaient le manque d'infrastructures de santé, le coût élevé des médicaments, l'incapacité à payer les factures médicales, la proximité d'un hôpital et une attitude négative envers les médecins. Les résultats montrent que l'automédication continue de progresser et qu'elle continuera d'avoir une influence sur la prévention et le traitement du paludisme dans la région étudiée, à moins que le gouvernement et d'autres personnes en position d'autorité ne fassent quelque chose à ce sujet. **WAJM 2023; 40(10); 1118-1130.**

**Mots-clés:** Attitude et comportement, absence d'assurance maladie, faible revenu, santé publique.

<sup>1</sup>Department of Health and Wellbeing, University of Sunderland in London, London, UK.

\*Correspondence: Dr. Chinweike Chinah, Department of Sunderland in London, London, UK; Email: chinwechinah@gmail.com