

The anxiety level, the awareness and the expectations from pediatric cardiologist of parents whose children diagnosed with cardiac murmur during general physical examination

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Abstract

Objectives: To determine the anxiety levels, the awareness of application to pediatric cardiology clinics and the expectations from pediatric cardiology doctors, of parents whose children have cardiac murmur.

Methods: The children with cardiac murmurs diagnosed during general physical examinations and applying to pediatric cardiology clinics at first time were included. Both pathological and innocent murmurs were taken. The questionnaire forms consisting of 7 questions were answered by 354 families applying to pediatric cardiology clinic between May-August 2013.

Results: The anxiety level of parents were 8 out of 10 points when they learned that their children had cardiac murmur. While the parents' awareness of a department dealing with pediatric heart disease was 60.7%, when their expectations were asked; 8.4% of the parents said that cardiac examination would be enough while 82.2% thought that echocardiography should be performed. It was determined that 59% of the parents applied to pediatric cardiology clinic within a day and 29.6% applied within a week. According to 79.9% of the parents the murmur was a sign of a serious heart disease; 51.4% of them researched and obtained information about murmur, and 55.4% of them used internet for that purpose.

Conclusions: The cardiac murmurs cause significant level of anxiety to parents even though they are mostly innocent. The parents' of children with cardiac murmur, who are not informed by a health care provider working at primary or secondary care health centers, typically visit a pediatric cardiology clinic and ask for echocardiographical examination.

Key words: Children, parent, cardiac murmur, anxiety, expectation.