Abstract

Objective: To describe the knowledge and behaviors of patients with diabetes towards foot care. Methods: A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted at a university research and intervention center in the interior of the state of São Paulo. Data were collected through interviews, two specific questionnaires, and physical examination of the foot in 55 patients in 2005. Results: The participants did not recognize the dimension of the true risks regarding lack of foot care. The participant knowledge of diabetes did not translate into actions to prevent foot problems. These results suggest the need to take into consideration specific individual characteristics and the individual's interactions with the environment in designing educational interventions. Conclusions: Health care professionals need to understand that discrepancy between knowledge and behaviors of patients with diabetes is not an obstacle impossible to cross, but a challenging issue that needs to be addressed.

Keywords

Diabetes mellitus, Primary prevention, Diabetic foot/prevention & control, Health behavior, Health knowledge, attitudes, practice.