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**Original article**

**Health seeking behavior of the population in the field practice area of Government Medical College, Amritsar**

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**Abstract**

**Background and objectives**: Among the various aspects of health, the social aspect includes behavior of the people and a beneficial health seeking behavior requires correct knowledge about causes of ill health and choices available for treatment of a disease. So this study was undertaken to study the health seeking behavior of the population.

**Materials and Methods**: In this cross-sectional study, 1514 families (756 urban and 758 rural) were studied over a period from 1st January 2014 to 31st August 2014. They were interviewed with the help of pretested and pre-structured questionnaire regarding their health seeking behavior. The data collected was statistically analyzed.

**Observation and Results:**More than one third i.e. 36.40% belonged to Upper Lower class according to the modified Kuppuswamy Scale of socio-economic status. About one-fourth (23.07%) of the total health problems in families were Cardiovascular problems. More than half of the families (57.66%) visited a Doctor as a first contact for their health problems. Out of the total reasons given for choosing the first contact for health problems, less than one-fourth i.e. 23.13% were that the first contact is ‘nearby’. Majority of the families 78.47% were fully satisfied with their first contact. Out of 326 families who were not fully satisfied with their first contact, more than two third (69.63%) visited other healer in another area. Majority of the families (63.14%) had Allopathy as their first choice of system of medicine.

**Conclusion:** The practice of visiting qualified health care providers was more in urban areas as compared to rural areas.

**Keywords:** health, behavior, treatment