

Perceptions of Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Success in Children: A Survey of Family Attitudes and Media Influence

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Background

- Emergency department (ED) families grapple with the dilemma of choosing whether to proceed with cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and other medical interventions that could potentially prolong a child's life.
- The objective of this research was to survey adults to determine their perceptions regarding CPR in children, specifically its probability of leading to survival.

Methods

- Prospective written surveys were distributed at four academic medical centers in West Michigan during 2022 including a children's hospital
- Trained researchers administered a validated survey to a convenience sample of 1000 non-critically ill patients and/or their families.
- Requested information included demographics, TV viewing habits, and anchoring vignette.
- The vignette asked respondents to estimate the chance of recovery (using visual analog scales) following traumatic cardiopulmonary arrest in a pediatric patient.
- Bivariate Pearson's correlations were performed to assess the association between the number of correct answers to the vignette with age and the frequency of media exposure.



Results

- Among the 1000 participants, the mean age was 38 years (range 18 to 87 years); 60% were female.
- Respondents watched an average of 19.8 +/- 11.3 hours of television/week.
- This included educational medical TV programs (59%) and TV fictional dramas (54%).
- 15% felt TV dramas were a reliable source of health information.
- CPR training was cited most often as a primary source of information concerning CPR (53%), followed by television (41%), friends or family with medical training (18%), personal experience (15%), and social media (14%).
- In the vignette, participants consistently overestimated the success rate of CPR (70% predicted survival) as well as long-term outcome (65% predicted a complete neurological recovery). There was no correlation between the number of correct responses and respondent age, television viewing patterns, or internet use.

Conclusions

- Most people surveyed overestimated the chances of recovery following CPR in a child regardless of media exposure or CPR training.
- Television, particularly medical dramas, remains an important source of information about CPR for patients (41%).
- This places an extra burden on the pediatric clinician as they must discuss decisions about the end of life with patients and family who will most likely be grossly misinformed about probable outcomes.

References

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