Emergency Department During Long Public Holidays

Uzun Resmi Tatil Dönemlerinde Acil Servis

Seda DAGAR,[1] Sibel SAHIN,[2] Yunus YILMAZ,[3] Ugur DURAK[1]

[1] *Department of Emergency Medicine, Kars State Hospital, Kars;*
[2] *Department of Emergency Medicine, Artvin State Hospital, Artvin;*
[3] *Department of Pediatric Service, Kars State Hospital, Kars*

SUMMARY

Objectives

The purpose of this study is to determine the impact of the expected increase in the volume of patient visits in the emergency department during holiday periods on physicians' tendencies regarding test and consultation requests as well as on the length of time patients stay in the emergency department.

Methods

The study groups included all of the patients who visited the emergency department during the nine-day public holiday (Eid al-Adha, a religious festival of sacrifice) celebrations and a nine-day non-holiday "normal" period. The patients' demographic information, reasons for their visits, comorbid diseases, whether or not they had undergone laboratory and screening tests, consultations, length of stay, and the way their visits ended were compared statistically.

Results

Of the 6353 patients enrolled in the study, 3523 (55.5%) were seen in the emergency department during the holiday period, while 2830 (45.5%) were seen during the non-holiday period (p<0.001). During the holiday period, there was a 1.9% decrease in laboratory test requests (p=0.108), a 7.7% increase in radiology examination requests (p<0.001), and a 1.2% increase in consultation requests (p=0.063). The patients' length of stay during the holiday period was 55.9±75.3 minutes and was 56.3±71.9 minutes during the non-holiday period (p=0.819). The length of time for the patients who underwent tests or consultations was 88.6±92.8 minutes during the holiday period and 92.6±87.5 minutes during the non-holiday period (p=0.224).

Conclusions

As expected, the number of patient visits to the emergency department increased during the holiday period, but this increase did not lead to a similar increase in test and consultation requests by the physicians, except for radiology examination requests. In addition, the length of time that patients stayed in the emergency department was not affected by the increase in the volume of patient visits during the holiday period.

Key words: Consultation; emergency; holiday; length of stay; test.

ÖZET

Amaç

Çalışmamızda uzun tatillerde acil servis başvurularında artış beklentisinin, hekimlerin inceleme ya da konsültasyon isteme yönelimine ve acil serviste hastaların kalış süresine etkisi olup olmadığını ortaya çıkarmayı amaçladık.

Gereç ve Yöntem

Çalışmamızda tatil dönemi olarak dokuz günlük Kurban Bayramı tatili kabul edilirken, karşılaştırma grubu ise dokuz günlük tatil dışı bir dönemde acil servise başvuran tüm hastalardan oluşturuldu. Her iki dönemde acil servise başvuran hastalar demografik bilgileri, başvuru nedenleri, komorbid hastalıkları, laboratuvar ve görüntüleme incelemesi yapılıp yapılmadığı, konsültasyon istemleri, acil serviste kalış süreleri ve sonuçlanma şekilleri bakımından karşılaştırıldı.

Bulgular

Tatil döneminde 3523 (%55.5), tatil dışı dönemde 2830 (%45.5) olmak üzere toplam 6353 acil servis başvurusu kaydedildi (p<0.001). Tatil dışı döneme göre tatil döneminde laboratuvar inceleme istemlerinde %1.9 oranında azalma (p=0.108), radyolojik inceleme kullanımında %7.7 oranında artış (p<0.001), konsültasyon istemlerinde %1.2 oranında artış (p=0.063) saptadık. Acil serviste ortalama kalış süreleri tatil döneminde 55.9±75.3 dakika, tatil dışı dönemde 56.3±71.9 dakika olarak bulundu (p=0.819). İnceleme veya konsültasyon yapılan hastaların ortalama kalış süresini tatil döneminde (88.6±92.8 dakika) tatil dışı döneme (92.6±87.5 dakika) göre daha kısa saptadık (p=0.224).

Sonuç

Uzun süreli tatillerde acil servislerde beklendiği gibi hasta yoğunluğu artmaktadır. Bu yoğunluk, hekimlerin laboratuvar incelemesi ve konsültasyon istemlerinde artışa yol açmazken, radyolojik inceleme istemlerinde artış gözlenmiştir. Ayrıca acil serviste ortalama kalış süresi başvuru sayısındaki artıştan etkilenmemektedir.

Anahtar sözcükler: *Konsültasyon; acil; tatil; kalış süresi; inceleme.*

Submitted: July 02, 2014 **Accepted:** July 31, 2014 **Published online:** November 30, 2014

Correspondence: Dr. Seda Dagar. Kars Devlet Hastanesi, Acil Servis, Kars, Turkey.
e-mail: sddagar@msn.com

© 2014 Emergency Medicine Association of Turkey. Production and Hosting by Elsevier B.V. Originally published in [2014] by Kare Publishing. This is an open access article under CC BY-NC-ND license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/)

Introduction

Hospitals are among the vital institutions that face interruption of services during weekends and public holidays. It has been reported that the volume of patients at emergency departments, which are always open, increases during weekends and public holidays due to the interruption of services in other departments.[1,2] Several studies have stated that the disruption at emergency departments during afterhours or holidays is due to the lack of personnel and experienced medical staff as well as limited access to laboratory and radiology services.[3-8]

Religious festivals in Turkey are usually celebrated as long public holidays by including both the previous and following weekends. Several reports have shown that there is an increase in the volume of non-emergency patient visits to emergency departments during times where regular clinical services are not offered or limited.[9-11] Regulations passed by the Turkish Ministry of Health regarding "Health services during public holidays" point out the expected increase in workload and volume of patients at emergency departments during public holidays, and recommends precautionary measures be taken in order to avoid serious disruption in health services.[12] However, to our knowledge, there has been no study in the literature reporting whether this increase during the holidays affects physicians' tendencies to request tests or consultations or the length of stay for patients at emergency departments.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine the disruptions of health services during a nine day religious public holiday, and how these disruptions affect patients and physicians at emergency services.

Materials and Methods

Kars State Hospital, as a district hospital, provides health care to around 550,000 people, including referrals it receives from neighboring cities. The hospital is home to a secondary emergency department, which serves to around 600 patients a day and approximately 210,000 patients a year.

After receiving approval from the local ethics committee, this study was conducted to compare emergency departments during a holiday period and a non-holiday period. All emergency department visits during both periods were included in our study. Consent was obtained from all patients enrolled in the study. Those who did not consent were excluded from the study. The first study group is composed of all patients who visited the emergency department during a nine-day public holiday (Eid al-Adha, a religious festival of sacrifice) between October 12th and October 20th, 2013. Because there is often a temporary increase in the volume of patients visiting the emergency department after the holiday period, the control group is composed of all patients who visited the emergency department during a nine-day non-holiday "regular" period between September 28th and October 6th of the same year. All patients visiting the emergency department between midnight Friday and midnight of the Sunday on the next weekend were prospectively incorporated into the study.

The patients' demographic information, reasons for their visits, the way they were transported to the hospital, comorbid diseases, whether or not laboratory and screening tests were performed, consultations, length of stay, and how their visits ended were recorded. Both traumatic and non-traumatic cases and reasons for visiting the emergency department were categorized. The data obtained from the both the study and the control groups were compared statistically.

Statistical analyses were performed using "Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows version 21.0" software (SPSS Inc., IL. USA). Quantitative data and the number of observations are expressed as percentages (%), and the qualitative data are expressed as mean±standard deviation (SD) or median (minimum-maximum). The T test and the chi-square test were used for comparing the data gathered from both groups. A p value <0.05 was considered significant.

Results

Of the 6353 emergency department visits included in the study, 3523 (55.5%) were during the holiday period and 2830 (45.5%) were during the non-holiday period, which indicated a 10% increase in the volume of emergency department visits during the holiday period. The difference in visits between the groups was statistically significant (p<0.001).

Of the patients visiting during the holiday period, 2051 (58.2%) were male, as were 1550 (54.8%) who visited during the non-holiday period (p=0.007). The mean age of patients who visited during the holiday period was 39.6±19.4 years (range, 1-110 years), and was 39.6±19.9 (range, 1-93 years) for the non-holiday period (p=0.965). During business hours (08:00-16:00), 1828 (51.9%) patients visited the emergency department during the holiday period compared to 1368 (48.3%) patients during the non-holiday period. There was a significant difference in terms of the rate of visits during both periods (p=0.004). The frequency of patients' comorbid diseases during both periods are listed in Table 1.

There were 660 (18.7%) patients admitted due to trauma during the holiday period and 484 (17.1%) during the non-holiday period (p=0.105). The reasons for traumatic and non-traumatic cases visiting the emergency department during both periods are listed in Tables 2 and 3, respectively.

The frequencies of physicians' laboratory and radiology re-

Download English Version:

https://daneshyari.com/en/article/2604155

Download Persian Version:

https://daneshyari.com/article/2604155

Daneshyari.com