

ARTESUNATE SUPPOSITORY FOR PRE-REFERRAL TREATMENT OF UNCOMPLICATED AND SEVERE FALCIPARUM MALARIA IN UNDER FIVE YEARS CHILDREN ATTENDING TWO HEALTH FACILITIES IN ABEOKUTA, NIGERIA
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ABSTRACT

Falciparum malaria is an important cause of death and illness in children in southwestern Nigeria which is accompanied with vomiting and severe anaemia. Rectal artesunate suppository (Plasmodium-50/200 mg Artesunate) was used for pre-referral treatment of uncomplicated, moderate and severe falciparum malaria in 264 under five years children attending two tertiary health facilities (Federal Medical Centre, Idi-Aba, Abeokuta (FMC) and State General Hospital Ijaye, (SGH)) in Abeokuta southwestern Nigeria that were selected systematically. Ethical approvals were obtained in addition to informed consent. Treatment were made at the point of selection based on WHO criteria for uncomplicated and severe malaria with blood sample collected at 0 hour and 24 hours for microscopic examination using giemsa staining technique. Analysis of data showed reduction in level of parasitaemia in all children at 24 hours of treatment with no parasite observed in some of the children with uncomplicated (60/78) and moderate falciparum malaria (21/32) in SGH, and uncomplicated (54/88) and moderate falciparum malaria (11/26) in FMC, while children with severe falciparum malaria have few parasites. There was considerable reduction in body temperature and few children with severe falciparum malaria persist body temperature between 38.0-38.9 oc. Children with uncomplicated and moderate falciparum malaria have fever while children with severe falciparum malaria showed symptoms such as vomiting, loss of appetite in addition to fever. Chloroquine is common drug of choice with few in combination with sulphadoxine-pyrimethemine and herbs. The use of artesunate suppository is effective in reducing level of parasitaemia thus effective when use as pre-referral therapy.

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