

Impact of a pre-travel consultation on traveler’s knowledge about traveler’s diarrhea

Joana Estrada, Cláudia Conceição, Rosa Teodósio

Introduction

International travels increased significantly but many travelers lack on pre-travel advice and knowledge about infectious risks and preventive measures.

Traveler's diarrhea (TD) is one of the most common travel-related health problems, interfering with planned activities and potentially contributing to antimicrobial resistance.

This study aimed to characterize the knowledge about TD in pre-travel consultation users of one Portuguese clinic and determine the consultation’s impact on knowledge levels.

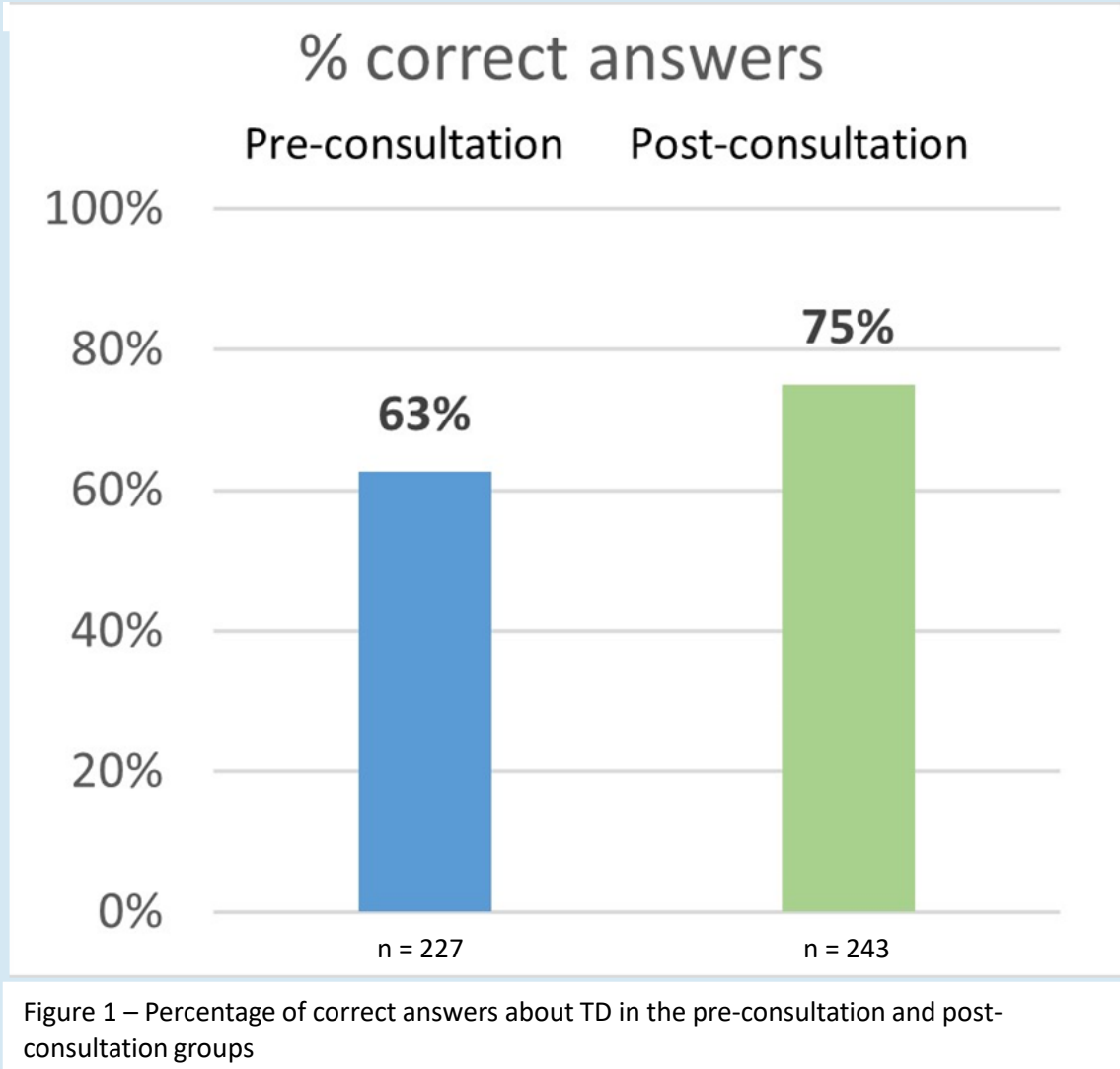
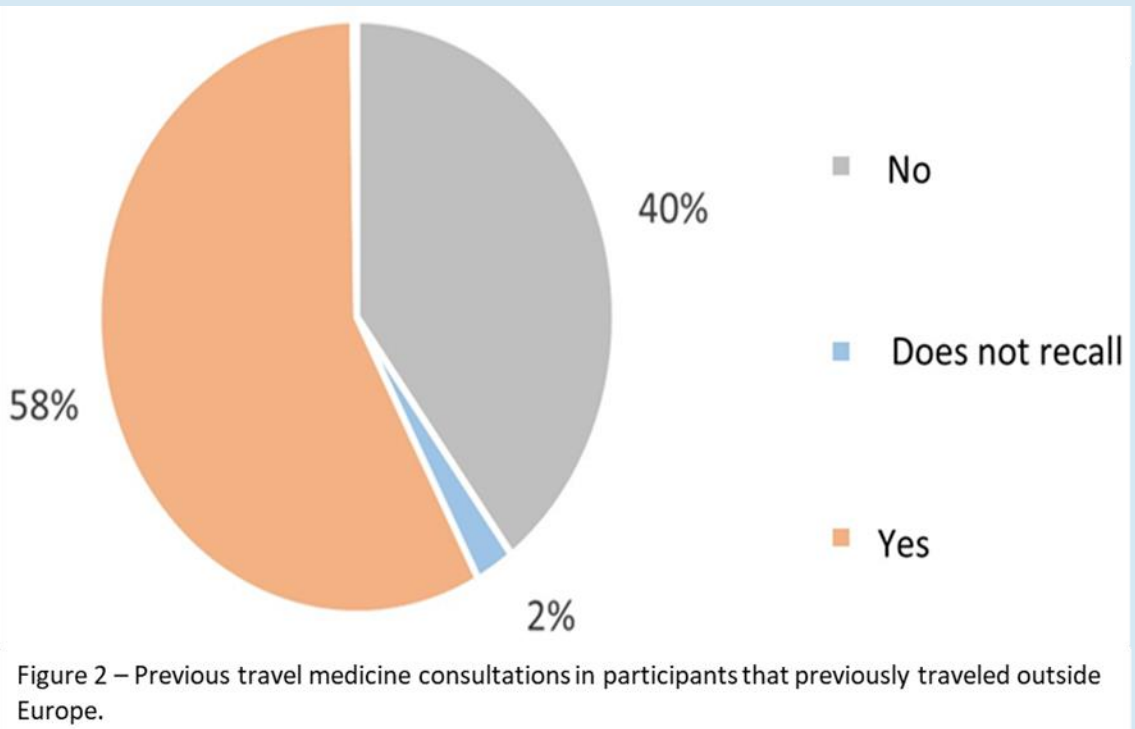
Methods

1. Quasi-experimental separate-sample-pretest-posttest design
2. Participants randomly assigned to two groups: control/pre-consultation or experimental/post-consultation;
3. Anonymous self-administered questionnaire assessed the knowledge on TD, including clinical presentation, prevention, and treatment;
4. Impact of the consultation was determined by comparing the percentage of correct answers using chi-square tests;
5. Stratification by sociodemographic and travel characteristics was performed to account for confounding;

Pre-travel consultation effectively increased travelers' TD knowledge but significant gaps remained

Results

- 470 participants were analysed;
- The post-consultation group showed significant improvement in knowledge, with correct answers increasing from 63% to 75% ($p<0.001$);
- However, knowledge gaps persisted:
 - over 50% were unaware of TD’s self-limited nature;
 - 30% didn’t recognize loperamide as a symptom reliever;
 - 36% believed all travelers should take antibiotics to prevent TD;
- Education level and previous travel outside Europe influenced baseline knowledge but not knowledge acquisition;
- Previous travel medicine consultations improved knowledge on both groups, but 40% of the travelers who previously traveled outside Europe did not have previous consultations;



Conclusions

Pre-travel consultation effectively increased travelers' TD knowledge. However, knowledge levels remained suboptimal, showing the need for targeted interventions to highlight the importance of pre-travel advice, increase travelers' literacy, and to optimize pre-travel consultations.

References

Brunette GW, Nemhauser JB. CDC Yellow Book 2020 [Internet] Oxford University Press; 2019. Preparing International Travelers; p. 9-124.
López-Vélez R, Lebens M, Bundy L, Barriga J, Steffen R. Bacterial travellers’ diarrhoea: A narrative review of literature published over the past 10 years. Travel Medicine and Infectious Disease. 2022; 47:102293.
Herck K, Zuckerman J, Castelli F, Damme P, Walker E, Steffen R. Travelers’ Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices on Prevention of Infectious Diseases: Results from a Pilot Study. Journal of Travel Medicine. 2006;10(2):75-8.



INSTITUTO DE HIGIENE E
MEDICINA TROPICAL
DESDE 1902

