

SKIN MORBIDITY PATTERN AMONG PATIENTS SEEN AT A UNIVERSITY PRIMARY CARE CLINIC IN RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA

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ABSTRACT

Information on the morbidity pattern of patients seen at a primary care clinic is sparse or not readily available for most countries in the Middle East including Saudi Arabia. A prospective study of all new patients presenting with skin disorders at the Primary Care Clinic of King Khalid University Hospital, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia was, therefore, carried out over a period of one year (1993-94). An analysis of the skin morbidities of 1183 new patients seen over this period is reported here. There is a male preponderance overall and more than 87% of the patients were below 40 years of age. Out of all patients with diseases of the skin, 77.5% were referred for specialist care. It is conceivable that the commonly observed pattern of dermatological diseases in this study may change over a period of time due to the interventions adopted by the primary care clinics, as part of social development, or as a cumulative effect of both. The primary care physician has to be aware of such changes by periodically analyzing the available morbidity pattern.