ABSTRACT

Background and Objectives: Dislocations, sprains and strains are common childhood musculoskeletal injuries, requiring medical attention. We investigated the characteristics associated with using traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) for children suffering from these injuries. Methods: From a nationwide representative insurance database of Taiwan, this cross-sectional study identified 50,769 children with dislocations, sprains and strains under 18 years of age, newly diagnosed between 1999 and 2009, without previous TCM experience. Children who initiated treatment with TCM (n = 24,063, 47.4%) were defined as TCM users, others were in the non-TCM group. Multivariable logistic regression models estimated odds ratios (ORs) of TCM use. Results: Girls and children living in central Taiwan (vs. northern) were associated with higher TCM use. The adjusted ORs (95% confidence interval (CI)) of TCM uses were 1.60 (1.42–1.79) for patients of 3–5 years, 2.20 (1.99–2.42) of 6–12 years and 1.82 (1.64–2.01) of 13–17 years, compared with those of the <2 years group. TCM users were less likely to have outpatient visits for Western medicine care and hospitalizations in the previous year. The TCM group was nearly twice more likely than the non-user group to receive treatments at local clinics (99.1% vs. 53.3%, p < 0.001). Conclusions: This study reveals important demographic and medical factors associated with TCM uses for children with dislocations, sprains and strains. Interestingly, local clinics are the main healthcare facilities providing TCM services. Further studies are needed to evaluate the outcomes of TCM treatment for these musculoskeletal injuries.

Keywords: pediatric; dislocations; sprains; strains; traditional Chinese medicine

REFERENCES