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Level of knowledge of a population about cardiopulmonary resuscitation

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Introduction: Occurrences of cardiorespiratory arrest outside the hospital are serious and represent a major public health problem. According to the Brazilian Society of Cardiology, cardiovascular diseases are the most responsible for deaths in Brazil, totaling from January to June 2023 approximately 179,656 deaths. Such numbers demonstrate the importance of offering the lay population adequate training on first aid in these cases, seeking to increase the chances of survival of the victim.⁽¹⁻³⁾

Objective: To analyze the level of knowledge of a population about cardiopulmonary resuscitation before and after the educational lectures.

Methods: This is a cross-sectional, interventional and quantitative study, carried out in a park in the city of Teresina-PI, in 2016. Two questionnaires, produced by the researchers, were applied, one before and the other after a theoretical-practical class on support of life in cases of cardiac arrest. The research was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the State University of Piauí-UESPI, with the number 50397815.5.0000.5209. All participants signed an free and informed consent term. Data were organized in Microsoft Office Excel 2010 spreadsheets and analyzed using Pearson Chi-square statistical tests for discrete random variables and Student's t test for continuous random variables. **Results:** One hundred and fourteen (114) individuals were included. In the application of the first questionnaire, 85 volunteers (74.6%) answered that they did not know how to identify a cardiac arrest ($p<0.001$). Regarding the signs of a cardiorespiratory arrest, 72 people (63.16%) answered "shortness of breath" ($p<0.001$). Regarding the initial measures in these cases, 71 individuals (62.3%) answered the item "remove the person's clothes" ($p=0.0087$). In the question about the possibility of performing resuscitation maneuvers, 54 people (47.4%) answered

“yes”, while 60 volunteers (52.6%) answered “no”, with no significant difference between the answers. In the second questionnaire, where the volunteers were asked to indicate the first aid steps in cases of cardiorespiratory arrest, 64 people (56.1%) answered all the resuscitation steps correctly and 108 individuals (94.7%) answered that they believed they were able to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

Conclusion: This work demonstrated that the participants had little knowledge about basic life support in cardiorespiratory arrest and marked incorrect items about first aid to victims. After the training offered by the researchers, most of the participants got the basic life support steps right and found themselves able to offer first aid in a cardiac arrest, demonstrating that even a quick and isolated action can help to increase the levels of knowledge and security of the population. With this, it is concluded that it is important to invest

in training for the lay population on first aid, seeking greater effectiveness of the support provided outside hospitals to possible victims of cardiac arrest.

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