

**SUMMARY –**

**Marcitelli R. Varicella-Zoster in children attended in day cares of Taubaté. [Dissertation]. São Paulo: Faculdade de Medicina, Universidade de São Paulo; 2005.**

**Objective:** To evaluate morbidity associated to varicella in daycares centers of Taubaté and the parent's knowledge about the disease. **Methods:** Cross-sectional study on 664 children that had varicella after admission to the daycare. Children's parents were interviewed by one of the study members who completed a previously tested form. Data were compiled in database and analyzed using software Epi-info release 6.01. **Results:** Children had varicella from six months to seven years of age (median 36 months) and 8.4% of cases occurred among infants under 12 months of age. The most frequent symptoms were: exanthema (100.0%), fever (85.4%), anorexia (39.6%) and headache (15.3%). Five hundred and seventeen children (77.9%) had medical visits, 80.6% were medicated, and 73 children (11.0%) were medicated with non hormonal drugs (NSAIDS) and 52 children (7.8%) antibiotics. Approximately 60% of children were absent from they daycares center and 67.2% for more than seven days. There were 38 complications in 38 children (5.7%) (95% CI: 3 – 8%), of these eight (1.2%) required hospitalization and five (0.7%) had sequels. The fact that varicella can cause complications was known by 43.9% of parents, 42.2% believed that the disease could be transmitted by the crusts, 86.0% were unaware of drugs contraindicated for children with varicella and only 12.8% knew that a vaccine was available. The disease cause 53% of working parents to miss more than one week of work **Conclusions:** Varicella involved healthy children of low age, resulted in an expressive number of medical consultation and prescriptions. Morbidity was especially associated to the presence of complications. The disease prevented children and parents from continuing their habitual activities. It is necessary to inform the population regarding to the natural history of the disease, the risks associated to the use of NSAIDS and the benefits of prevention through the vaccine.

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**Keywords: 1. MORBIDITY RESEARCH 2. VARICELLA/epidemiology 3. HERPESVÍRUS 3 4. VARICELLA/complications 5. CROSS-SECTIONAL 6.DAY CARE CENTER 7. TAUBATÉ (SP)**