

Aged and more severe allergic rhinitis patients are less likely to the use information and communication technologies for illness management and monitoring

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Abstract

Background: Information and communication technologies (ICTs) improve patient-centered care and are routinely used in Allergic Rhinitis (AR), but patients' preferences and attitudes are unexplored. This study examines AR-related information preferences and ICT use by AR patients. **Methods:** A survey-based cross-sectional study was carried out in Ecuador in seven centers of reference of allergic disease. Participants were 18 or older, diagnosed with AR, and had access to ICT and the internet. Descriptive and binomial logistic regression were done. A value of less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant. **Results:** 217 patients were included. 47% used ICTs to learn about AR, 38.2% found it useful. 75% disagreed that ICTs reduce doctor's appointments. Individuals with poorer quality of life were 27% more likely to utilize ICTs to contact their doctor and 23% more likely to be interested in AR-related content. Patients with long-term AR or other allergies were less likely to use ICTs. Higher education and lower quality of life may increase AR app adoption by 4.8 times. Academic preparation five-fold increased ICT use for health provider communication. Mild-persistent allergic rhinitis 12 times enhanced the probabilities of using ICTs to share experiences and communicate with other patients. **Conclusions:** Our study found that moderate-to-severe AR individuals are not interested in information despite ICTs' potential benefits. Consequently, allergists should use evidence-based resources and establish new technological options for content, follow-up, and emotional support for AR patients in Ecuador.

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