

Information the General Citizenry Needs during a Health Crisis : What Quality Health Crisis Information should be Collected and What Meaningful Information should be Shared with the Public?

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Abstract : There have so far been no surveys of the general citizenry related to information that local residents need during a health crisis. The purpose of this study was to investigate what information the general citizenry most needs. We conducted a mail-based survey. The efficacy of Internet surveys for gathering health crisis information was also investigated. In the case of food poisoning, influenza, severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), and chemical substances, the location and extent of an outbreak, symptoms seen, routes of infection, and the diffusion paths of a chemical substance were all important health crisis information needed by the general citizenry. Regarding pharmaceuticals, interest was high in the name of the offending pharmaceutical, sequelae, the mortality rate, and the medical institutions where it was administered. As for an Internet-based survey, some items in an Internet survey were 0.1 or 0.2 points higher than the same items in a mail survey, but there was no large discrepancy between the results of the Internet survey and the results of the mail survey. This result suggests that Internet-based surveys can thus be used to survey the general population about health crisis information.

Key words : Health crisis, Information, General citizenry, Infectious disease, Chemical substance contamination, Drug reaction