ABSTRACT

A descriptive study was conducted in Maeramad district, Tak province, Thailand, with the aim to investigate the health-seeking behavior for malaria treatment among the household members along the Thai-Myanmar border area.

A quantitative approach using questionnaires was undertaken among one hundred seventy-eight Thai respondents who had ever had malaria or malaria patients living in their houses during the last year. The study tried to find out their knowledge, perception, belief and the availability and accessibility related with malaria treatment. The subjects were males and females between 16-64 years old.

The study results revealed that most of the respondents had negative health-seeking behavior. Half of them visited to health personnel for their first treatment choice. Nearly half of them used self-treatment as the first treatment choice. None had visited traditional healers or drug stores for malaria treatment. The majority of the respondents delayed seeking treatment and most of the respondents sought the malaria treatment from health personnel within two to three days. Almost all of them had a good knowledge of malaria, perceived malaria as a life threatening disease and believed in modern treatment.

The results of this study suggest that proactive efforts should be made to identify these people with negative health seeking behavior and target them for malaria health education.