



Awareness Of Breast Cancer Among College Girls

KEYWORDS

Cancer. Breast Cancer, pink ribbon, Risk Factors.

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ABSTRACT *Cancer is a common condition and a serious health problem. One in three people will develop some form of cancer during their lifetime. The biggest risk factor for developing cancer is age, with the majority of cancers more common in older than younger people. There are different types of cancer and breast cancer is widely seen. Breast cancer is the development of cancer from breast tissue. Signs of breast cancer may include a lump in the breast, a change in breast shape, dimpling of the skin, fluid coming from the nipple, or a red scaly patch of skin. In those with distant spread of the disease, there may be bone pain, swollen lymph nodes, shortness of breath, or yellow skin. Breast cancer is the most common cancer in the world. Being breast aware is part of caring for your body. It means getting to know how your breasts look and feel so you know what is normal for you. The pink ribbon is the most prominent symbol of breast cancer awareness, Month of October is celebrated as National Breast Cancer Awareness Month in many parts of the world. This paper deals about the awareness of breast cancer among young girls, their knowledge about the disease, cure and treatment very specifically about the recent treatment advancement and Pink ribbon concept.*

INTRODUCTION:

Breast cancer is the second most common cancer in Indian women. The incidence is more in urban than rural women. It is more prevalent in the higher socio-economic groups. Women of the Parsi community face a higher risk. The average incidence rate varies from 22-28 per 100,000 women per year in urban settings to 6 per 100,000 women per year in rural areas. Due to rapid urbanization and westernization of lifestyles, there is a rising incidence of breast cancer in India. According to The International Agency for Research on Cancer, which is part of the World Health Organisation, there were approximately 79,000 women per year affected by breast cancer in India in 2001 and over 80,000 women in 2002.

Typically, breast cancer arises from cells lining the milk ducts and slowly grows into a lump. It is thought that it takes about 10 years for a tumour to become 1 cm in size starting from a single cell. A malignant tumour has the ability to spread beyond the breast to other parts of the body via the lymphatics or the blood stream.

Awareness on Breast Cancer:

To be breast aware means becoming familiar with how your breasts look and feel. You should understand how your breasts may change at different times during the month and also as you get older. For some women, breasts become enlarged, tender and lumpy just before a period, and then return to normal once the period is over, others may have swollen breasts throughout their cycle. Age, pregnancy, and the menopause can all affect the size and feel of your breasts. The important thing is to recognise which changes are usual and which are not. Make sure you know what is normal for you.

Being breast aware includes self examination for breast cancer and also identifying the various systems of the cancer

- ◆ Painless lump in the breast
- ◆ Dimpling of skin over breast
- ◆ Change in contour over the breast
- ◆ Rash or ulcer over the nipple

- ◆ Indrawing of the nipple
- ◆ Blood stained discharge through the nipple
- ◆ Ulceration of the nipple
- ◆ Lump or fullness in the armpit
- ◆ Arm swelling

If any of these is found in the breast self examination, then you should consult your doctor. Please remember that early detection leads to complete cure. The survival rates for early breast cancer are excellent and these women lead healthy normal lives.

Pink Ribbon

The pink ribbon is an international symbol of breast cancer awareness. Pink ribbons, and the color pink in general, identify the wearer or promoter with the breast cancer brand and express moral support for women with breast cancer. Pink ribbons are most commonly seen during National Breast Cancer Awareness Month that is the month of October.

Preventable And Non-Preventable Breast Cancer Factors

Several factors can contribute to developing breast cancer. Some of these factors are lifestyle choices and some are biological characteristics. The biological characteristics encoded in DNA are factors that cannot be controlled. The other factors, however, can be controlled to prevent an increased risk for breast cancer.

Non preventable breast cancer factors include:

Family pre-disposition:

If a family member has developed breast cancer in the past, or currently has breast cancer, women in that immediate family have a greater risk for breast cancer than those without family history. If you have a grandmother, mother, sister, or daughter who has been diagnosed with breast cancer, this does put you in a higher risk group. See your doctor at any sign of unusual symptoms.

Age:

As women become older, the risk for breast cancer increases. Most cases of breast cancer are found in women over 40, though the number of younger women developing breast cancer is currently on the rise.

Race:

Breast cancer is diagnosed more often in white women than Asian, or African women. The reason for this has yet to be defined, but women of all races should still be concerned.

Reproductive and menstrual history:

Women who experienced their first menstrual cycle before age 12, had their menopause after age 55, and/or never had children are at an increased risk of breast cancer.

PREVENTABLE BREAST FACTORS INCLUDE**Body weight:**

People who are obese or overweight face a greater chance of developing breast cancer than those who are of a normal weight. A woman who exercises four hours per week reduces her risk of breast cancer. Exercise pumps up the immune system and cuts the estrogen level.

Smoking:

Many people are aware that smoking increases lung cancer risk, but it also increases breast cancer risk as well. One recent study indicated there may be a link. Studies of the relationship of breast cancer to cigarette smoking and second-hand cigarette smoke are still under investigation. However, smoking decreases your survival rate once you have been diagnosed with breast cancer.

Drinking Alcohol:

Excessive alcohol consumption, more than one drink a day, can lead to a higher risk for breast cancer. Studies show that breast cells are exposed to higher levels of estrogen when consuming alcohol. This may trigger the cells to become cancerous. The more alcohol you drink, the higher your risk.

Diet:

Eat a low-fat, nutritious diet. A high-fat diet increases the risk of breast cancer. Fat triggers the hormone estrogen, that fuels tumor growth. Fill your diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables. Treatment for breast cancer

The main types of treatment for breast cancer are:

- Surgery
- Radiation therapy
- Chemotherapy
- Hormone therapy
- Targeted therapy
- Bone-directed therapy

Treatments can be classified into broad groups, based on how they work and when they are used.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Friedman, Nelson et al (1994) in their paper in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine noted that whereas over 90% of women were aware of breast self examination (BSE) practice, a mere 27% perform BSE monthly. They found that a majority of their subjects knew about most of the recommended BSE steps. The most frequently endorsed barrier was forgetting, or being too busy. In our study on the other hand the overall performance of BSE was quite low with only 12 out of 80 or 15% women reporting a once a month performance, and 23% reported performing BSE irregularly. The most common reason for non performance stated by women on our study was, not

knowing the correct method of performing it while being too busy was the second most important reason.

In Puerto Rico's first national study of breast cancer knowledge, beliefs, and early detection practices among elderly women (65 and above) Sanchez, Suarez et al (17) found no statistically significant correlation between knowledge and early detection practice. In our study too we concluded that although 38.75% of women were found to have good awareness about breast cancer, very few (12%) actually performed BSE on a monthly basis. Sanchez et al also noted that those women who had lesser misconceptions were more likely to have had a clinical breast examination (CBE) or a mammogram. They also noted that a higher socio economic status correlated positively with BSE performance, as did age. In our study too, we found that women belonging to a higher social class were more aware than those who were economically challenged, and younger women were more aware than older ones.

Martha Nyanungo Sambanje did a study in the 2001 was designed to evaluate the level of breast cancer awareness among university students in Angola. In particular, we focused on perceptions about the causes of breast cancer, risk factors associated with breast cancer and knowledge of breast self-examination. Participants were drawn from students enrolled in Medical and Health related programs and non-medical programs from six universities in the capital Luanda. Permission to conduct the study was sought and granted by the University of Metodista de Angola's Review Board. At participating institutions, the purpose of the study was explained to participants and those who freely agreed to participate were enrolled in this study. A total of 595 students (350 females and 245 males) volunteered and successfully completed the survey. Participants in non-medical programs were drawn from a teacher-training, foreign language and biological science programs.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH:**

The most prevalent cancer in the world is that of the breast being responsible for 10.4% of the global burden among Indian women, Breast cancer is the second most common cancer after cancer of the uterine cervix and is already the leading cancer in certain metropolitan cities such as Mumbai, Delhi, Nagpur and Trivandrum.

Lack of awareness has become the major issue; people lack the awareness and knowledge about the disease. This has led to the stagnation in the early detection of the disease and its treatment. Women from their young age need to have knowledge about the disease. Early detection leads to early treatment. So this study aims at finding the knowledge of the college students about breast cancer

AIM:

To find the level of awareness on breast cancer among college students

OBJECTIVES :

- To find level the of awareness of breast cancer among college students
- To find the level of knowledge of treatment/Mammogram of breast cancer
- To find the level of knowledge about self examination of breast cancer
- To find the means of gaining information about breast cancer
- To find their knowledge about pink ribbon

CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION:

Cancer : a malignant growth or tumour resulting from an uncontrolled division of cells.

Breast cancer : Breast cancer is cancer that develops from breast tissue Signs of breast cancer may include a lump in the breast, a change in breast shape, dimpling of the skin, fluid coming from the nipple, or a red scaly patch of skin. In those with distant spread of the disease, there may be bone pain, swollen lymph nodes, shortness of breath, or yellow skin.

Pink ribbon : The pink ribbon is an international symbol of breast cancer awareness. Pink ribbons, and the color pink in general, identify the wearer or promoter with the breast cancer brand and express moral support for women with breast cancer.

RESEARCH DESIGN:

Descriptive research gathers quantifiable information that can be used for statistical inference on your target audience through data analysis. As a consequence this type of research takes the form of closed-ended questions, which limits its ability to provide unique insights. Hence the researcher has adopted descriptive research design for the study

SAMPLE :

40 undergraduate students were interviewed with a questionnaire regarding their knowledge about breast cancer.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Data was collected and percentage analysis was done

SALIENT FINDINGS

- Half of the respondents(50%) belong to the age group of twenty
- 100% of the respondents knows about breast cancer
- Majority of the respondents (90%) say that they not know about Pink Ribbon
- 100% of the respondents source of information is through media
- Majority of the respondents (90%) say they don't know what is mammogram
- 100% has not done self examination for breast cancer
- Most of the respondents(75%) says knowledge of breast cancer is poor among girls

DISCUSSION

Strong support for the idea that low cancer awareness may lead to delay in diagnosis comes from the consistent finding across many cancer sites that failure to recognise that symptoms are serious is associated with delay in presentation. Other risk factors for delay in presentation in cancer include social deprivation, older age, atypical presentation and black and minority ethnic group Cancer awareness is currently at the forefront of Government policy. The highlighted the importance of raising awareness in the general population The role of young people is to coordinate a programme of activities to promote early diagnosis, including raising public awareness of the signs and symptoms of early cancer, encouraging people to seek help sooner, reducing delays in primary care, and access to diagnostics.

REFERENCE

http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/prod_consump/groups/cr_common/@nre/@hea/documents/generalcontent/cr_052797.pdf
<http://www.nationalbreastcancer.org/breast-cancer-awareness-month>