ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Awareness Level of Nurses about Carcinoma Breast Risk Factors in Mayo Hospital Lahore

NADIA MAJID[1], USMAN ALI RAHMAN[2], MUHAMMAD KALEEM AKHTER[3], FARZANA IQBAL[4], HUMIARA YOUSAF[5], MALIHA JAVED[6]
[1]Staff Nurse, Mayo Hospital Lahore
[2]Associate Professor, Al-Aleem Medical College/Gulab Devi Hospital Lahore
[3]Operation Theater Technologist, Mayo Hospital Lahore
[4]Senior Nursing Instructor, Post Graduate Nursing school Mayo Hospital Lahore
[5]Senior Demonstrator, Al-Aleem Medical College Lahore
[6]Senior Registrar, Services Hospital Lahore
Correspondence to Muhammad Kaleem Akhter, Email: kaleem.akhter05@gmail.com, Tel. 0300-8992489

ABSTRACT

Aim: To assess level of awareness in nurses regarding risk factors related to carcinoma breast at a tertiary care public hospital Lahore
Methods: It was a descriptive study. This study took place at Mayo Hospital Lahore. The nurses of different departments especially the oncology department were recruited. A sample of n=300 was recruited through random probability sampling methods. An adopted close ended questionnaire was applied. The data was interpreted and analyzed by SPSS version 25. The data was analyzed in the form of tables and graphs.
Results: Of the participants nurses 67% knew that smoking is a risk factor for carcinoma breast. It was also found that 59% agreed that exposure to another person's cigarettes smoke also can cause breast carcinoma. Results also suggest that 88% agreed that drinking more than one glass of alcohol a day also can cause breast cancer. Moreover results suggest 71% agreed that being overweight (BMI>25) also can cause breast carcinoma. Results also suggest that 54% agreed that being over 70 years old can lead to breast cancer.
Conclusion: Overall knowledge related to risk factors of breast carcinoma among nurses was satisfactory. Top rating risk factors were, smoking cigarettes and family history. Moreover, nurses knowledge regarding breast carcinoma symptoms and signs was also good among participants
MeSH: Carcinoma Breast, Awareness, Risk Factor

INTRODUCTION

Currently there is an increase in frequency of breast cancer related morbidity and death which is one of the greatest health care concerns. Therefore for women breast cancer has become a fearful disease. Breast carcinoma is the second most leading cause of mortality in women worldwide and is considered the most frequent carcinoma for women.[1] In world every year, above 1.6 million female patients are diagnosed with cancer of breast[2]. The modern advanced treatment technologies have reached to a destination where it is shown that one third of all forms of cancers can be prevented including Breast Cancer, while one third that is early diagnosed can be treated successfully[3]. Even in presence of available advanced treatment, fort thousand women face mortality every year due to carcinoma breast. Majority of the women with breast cancer are age above 50 years, while the prevalence of breast cancer below 40 years of age is only 6%[2].

Low level of knowledge and ineffective information regarding breast cancer further threatens the health and life of women. Breast cancer is considered as silent killer of women – especially those who have lack of awareness and continue an ignore life about breast cancer. Those who do not follow routine diagnosis and screening for early detection[4].

Breast cancer can be successfully treated only in case of early detection and diagnosis. Nurses are the key players in identifying factors related to increase chance of breast carcinoma and can decrease the risk of breast cancer through encouraging people for early screening and detection[5].

Nurses are in strong position, which can increase knowledge of females, regarding breast cancer, which directly is influenced by their own knowledge regarding the risk factors related to breast cancer[6]. For increasing knowledge related to risk factors, prevention of carcinoma breast and to decrease the mortality from carcinoma breast it is very essential to find the awareness level of nurses regarding risk factors related to carcinoma breast.

Increased knowledge of nurses regarding breast cancer, risk factors, early screening and detection will directly affect the health of female patients. They have a very important role in assessing and diagnosing patients for breast cancer. Nurses can help the females to adopt healthy behaviors and decrease chances of developing breast cancer in hospitals as well as community settings. Breast cancer Mortality and morbidity among women can be prevented after the nurses recognize all the risk factors for breast cancer. They can provide quality education to all females visiting their centers and can educate the community in large.

METHODS

It was a descriptive cross sectional survey design used to check the awareness of nurses regarding the breast cancer and its risk factors among staff nurses at Mayo Hospital Lahore. For recruiting 300 study participants, a random probability sampling methods was applied. Nurses awareness towards breast cancer and its risk factors were assessed by an adopted close ended questionnaire from. The data was interpreted and analyzed by SPSS version 25. The qualitative data like gender was presented in the form of pie chart and tables with its percentage and quantitative data was presented in the form of frequency distribution mean, range and standard deviation.

RESULTS

Mean age of participants was 32.2± 5.2 years with range from 21 years to 46 years. Out of these 300 participants 14% had age between 21-25 years, 20% had age between 26-30 years, 43% had age between 31-35 years, 21% had age between 36-40 years while 2% had age more than 40 years. It also revealed that all the 100% participants were female nurses from different departments of Mayo Hospital Lahore. It was also found that Muslim participants were 76% and Christian participants were 24% of the total number. Findings also suggest that 57% participants were having qualification as 3 years General nursing, 21.67% were having General Nursing plus Specialization and remaining 21.33% were having BSN and Post RN BSN degree. Furthermore it was also

found that 66% participants had experience less than 5 years, 19.67% had 6-10 years of experience, 7% nurses had experience 11to 15 years and remaining 7% were having more than 15 years of job experience. It also shows that 16.67% nurses were from Medicine department, 11.33% from Surgery department, 11% from emergency, 11% from ICU, 16.67% from pediatric department and 33.33% participants were from oncology department of Mayo Hospital Lahore (Figure 1).

It also reveals that 22% participants disagreed, 9% not sure and 67% agreed that smoking any cigarettes at all causes breast cancer while 17% participants disagreed, 24% not sure and 59% agreed that exposure to another person's cigarettes smoke also can cause breast cancer. Findings also suggest that 36% participants disagreed, 28% not sure and 36% agreed that having less than 5 portion of fruit and vegetable per day can lead to breast cancer. Result also reveals that 8% participants disagreed, 4% not sure and 88% agreed that drinking more than one glass of alcohol a day also can cause breast cancer. Moreover findings suggest that 47% participants disagreed, 17% not sure and 36% agreed that having red meat or foods which are processed one time or more per day can lead to breast cancer. Furthermore, the table above reveals that 6% participants disagreed, 23% not sure and 71% agreed that being overweight (BMI>25) also can cause breast cancer. Findings also suggest that 15% participants disagreed, 31% not sure and 54% agreed that being over 70 years old can lead to breast cancer. Results also reveals that 25% participants disagreed, 7% not sure and 68% agreed that having close family with cancer also can cause breast cancer. It was also found that 45% participants disagreed, 45% not sure and 10% agreed that doing moderate physical activity less than 30 minutes 5 times a week can lead to breast carcinoma. Furthermore the finding reveals that 2% participants disagreed, 35% not sure and 63% agreed that Infection with HPV (Human Papillomavirus) also can cause breast cancer (Table 1).

It also revealed that 91% study participants said yes that a lump or swelling without any other reason can be a sign of carcinoma breast, where as 9% said no to the statement. Moreover it was found that 63% study participants responded with yes to a statement that persistent breast pain without any other reason can be a sign of carcinoma breast, while on the other hand 19% said no and 18% said that they don't know about it. Result findings also show that 86% responded with yes to a statement bloody discharge from nipple can be a sign of carcinoma breast, 12% said no whereas 2% said that they don't know. Furthermore it is suggested that 59% said yes and 35% said no to a statement that hoarseness of voice or cough can be a sign of carcinoma breast, and 6% responded with don't know. Results also reveals that 34% responded yes, 42% responded with No and 24% don't know that changes in normal bowel or bladder habits can be a sign of carcinoma breast. Findings also shows that 74% said yes, and 25% said no to a statement that a non healing ulcer can be a sign of carcinoma breast, whereas 1% said they don't know. Result findings suggest that 34% responded yes, 46% responded no and 20% said that they don't know if the unexplained weight loss can be a sign of carcinoma breast.
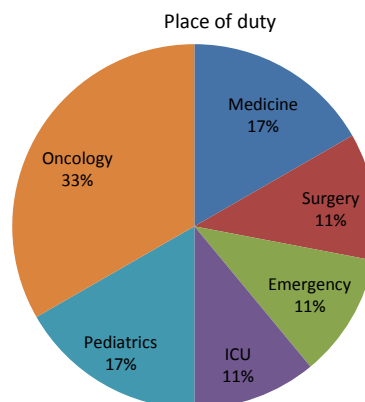
Figure 1: Place of duty of participants

Place of duty

Table 1: Frequency of awareness about risk factors of breast cancer

Variables	Disagree		Not sure		Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Smoking any cigarettes at all	66	22	28	9.3	206	68.7
Exposure to another person's cigarettes smoke	52	17.3	73	24.3	175	58.3
Having meal less than 5 portion of fruit and vegetable per day	109	36.3	84	28	107	35.7
Drinking more than one glass of alcohol a day	25	8.3	13	4.3	262	87.3
Taking red meat or foods processed one time or more in a day	142	47.3	50	16.7	108	36
Being overweight (BMI>25)	17	5.7	71	23.7	212	70.7
Being over 70 years old	45	15	95	31.7	160	53.3
Having close family with cancer	76	25.3	22	7.3	202	67.3
Moderate physical activity less than 30 min 5 times a week	136	45.3	135	45	29	9.7
Infection with HPV (Human Papillomavirus)	5	1.7	106	35.3	189	63

DISCUSSION

According to this study, 67% had awareness that smoking cigarettes causes breast cancer. A previous study found similar results where 54.4% participants had knowledge that smoking is a risk factor of breast carcinoma[7]. Present study found that 88% participants had awareness that drinking more than one glass of alcohol a day also can cause breast cancer. Another study found findings in contrary to the present study where less than 50% of the study participants knew regarding different established factors related to carcinoma breast[8].

Another study was conducted among nurses at Mulago National Referral hospital. It showed that participants had very poor knowledge regarding risk factors related to carcinoma breast. The knowledge of risk factors related to carcinoma breast was only 9%[9].

In this study, 71% of the study participants knew that being overweight (BMI>25) also can cause breast cancer where in contrast in another previous study only 29.3% of participant nurses had knowledge that obesity is one of the risk factor related to breast carcinoma[7]. A cross-sectional survey was conducted in 07 teaching hospitals of Karachi, Pakistan. According to their results only 28% nurses had knowledge that obesity is a risk factor of developing carcinoma breast[10].

In this research study, 54% agreed that being over 70 years old can lead to breast cancer, where in a previous very few participants 32% said that increasing age is a risk factor of the breast cancer[7]. In present study findings suggest that 68% agreed that having close family with cancer also can cause breast cancer where in a previous study it was found that 69.6%participants knew that, family history can be a factor related to risk of developing breast carcinoma among women[7]. This equality is because of the fact that increase weight predisposes to many chronic diseases.

In the present study 91% study participants said unexplained lump or swelling is a sign of carcinoma breast. Another study regarding signs of carcinoma breast showed that breast lump was the most frequent symptom of the participants 58.1%.[7] A similar previous study which was conducted related to self examination of breast at Turkey. It showed that 70% of the nurses thought that the breast lump and nipple discharge were related to breast carcinoma[11].

In another previous study showed that nurses had good knowledge regarding symptoms and signs related to carcinoma breast where (91.6%) had this knowledge[8].

CONCLUSION

Overall knowledge regarding risk factors of breast cancer among nurses was satisfactory. Majority of the nurses were aware of the highlighted factors related to high risk of breast carcinoma in females. Top rating risk factors were, smoking cigarettes, family history, increased weight and advanced age. Moreover, the nurses knowledge regarding the symptoms and signs of carcinoma breast was also good among participants

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