

Awareness on breast self examination among reproductive age women

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ABSTRACT

Background & Objectives: Breast self-examination (BSE) is an inspection by a woman of her breasts to detect breast problem and cancer. The objective of the study was to identify awareness on breast self-examination among the reproductive age women. **Materials & Methods:** A descriptive study was carried out to find out the awareness on Breast Self-Examination among Reproductive Age Group Women in Kusunti, Lalitpur. 50 women (20 to 45 years) were selected by using purposive sampling technique. Semi structured interview questionnaire was used for data collection. **Results:** This study showed that more than three fourth respondents (78%) said breast cancer is growth of extra lump in breast. More than three fourth respondents (82%) said diagnosis of breast cancer in early stage by BSE and only 10% of respondents had knowledge about diagnosing by mammogram. Nearly three fourth (72%) of the respondents had knowledge about meaning of BSE. More than half of the respondents (60%) got the information from health workers. One fourth of the respondents (32%) said that they don't know about palpation in circular motion. **Conclusion:** Based on the findings, it is concluded women have awareness on BSE but least only know how to perform it in step wise and majority of women neglects in practicing in period basis. It is recommended that further awareness program should be conducted to fulfill the gap on BSE.

Key words: Awareness; breast self examination; reproductive age women.

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INTRODUCTION

Breast self-examination (BSE) is screening method used to detect early breast cancer. The method involves the woman herself looking at and feeling each breast for possible lumps, distortions or swelling. It is more common in young and premenopausal women.¹

Nearly 1.7 million new breast cancer cases were diagnosed in 2012. Breast cancer is the second most common cancer in women and men worldwide. In 2012, it represented about 12% of all new cancer cases and 25% of all cancers in women. Breast cancer is the most frequently diagnosed cancer among women in 140 of 184 countries worldwide.

Globally, breast cancer now represents one in four of all cancers in women. Since 2008, worldwide breast cancer incidence has increased by more than 20%. Mortality has increased by 14 percent.² According to American cancer society, women should do monthly self-examination of the breast at the age of 21 years for early detection of the breast cancer. As earlier breast cancer is found and diagnosed, the better chance of treating it effectively. That is why BSE is useful health care practice for early detection of breast cancer. A woman's risk of breast cancer approximately doubles if she has a first degree relative (mother, sister and daughter) who has been diagnosed with

breast cancer. About 15% of women who get breast cancer have a family member diagnosed with it. In 2011, there were more than 2.6 million breast cancer survivors in the US. About one in eight U.S women will develop invasive breast cancer over the course of her life time.³

Breast cancer is the second most common malignancy among women in Nepal. It is more common in young premenopausal. The breast cancer management in Nepal is a little different compared with the developed countries. The reasons are socioeconomic status, lack of education and lack of facilities. Although cancer care is on the rise in Nepal, the optimal facility for centers managing breast cancer has to be improved significantly. Cancer education, screening and early detection are the key elements to influence the diagnosis, treatment and prognosis of breast cancer in Nepal. Breast cancer awareness and clinical breast examination are important tools for early detection in our resource limited context. Breast cancer can be cured in majority of the cases if diagnosed in early stages.⁴

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The design of the research study was descriptive. The study was conducted at Kusunti, Lalitpur. The populations were women of age group (20 to 45

years) from Pancheswor Mahila Jagaran Kendra. Non- probability purposive sampling techniques were used to select samples. Data was collected within three weeks. The total sample size 50 was selected for the study. Data was collected by using face to face interview technique using semi-structured questionnaire. Permission was taken from the head of the Kendra. The respondents were explained about the purpose of the research and verbal consent was taken before involving them into the interview. Confidentiality of the participants was maintained in the study. The data collected was edited and coded carefully. Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS 18.0 version) was used for data entry and analysis of the data. The data were analyzed by using simple descriptive i.e. mean, frequency and percentage to describe variables.

RESULTS

Almost one third (32%) of the respondents were 40 years and lowest (8%) of the respondents was age between 25 to 29 yrs. The respondents mean age was 35 years. Regarding ethnicity, Brahmin was in majority with 66% of the total respondents. Lowest 4% of the respondents were Newar. Almost one fourth (24%) of the respondents had completed the primary and secondary level, where as 20% of the

Table 1: Respondents' Awareness on Breast Cancer (n=50)

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Meaning of Breast Cancer		
Finding any abnormalities of breast	2	4.0
Ulcer in breast	2	4.0
Growth of extra lump in breast	39	78.0
Finding cancer cell in breast tissue	7	14.0
Diagnosing breast cancer at early stage *		
Breast Self Examination	41	82.0
Breast Examination by physician	28	56.0
Mammogram	5	10.0
Biopsy	6	12.0
Sign and Symptoms of Breast Cancer*		
Painless abnormal growth in breast	41	82.0
Change in size and shape	39	78.0
Change in skin color	31	62.0
Abnormal blood mixed discharge from nipple	36	72.0
Enlargement of axillary lymph node	40	80.0

* Multiple Responses

Table 2: Respondents' Awareness on Breast Self Examination (BSE) (n=50)

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Meaning about BSE		
Meaning about BSE Examination of own breast to check any abnormalities	36	72.0
Examination done by health personnel to check abnormalities	6	12.0
Examination for checking breast size only	1	2.0
Examination for roughly palpate breast	7	14
Get Information On BSE		
Health Worker	30	60.0
Friends	2	4.0
Media	18	36.0
Need of BSE		
To find out a lump or problem on breast at early stage	33	66.0
To find out shape, size and abnormalities	3	6.0
Helps to maintain good health	11	22.0
To find out any changes of breast and nipple	3	6.0
Appropriate Time for BSE in Pre-menopausal Women		
Before menstruation period	4	8.0
During menstruation period	1	2.0
7-10days after the first day of the menstrual period has stopped	40	80.0
Whenever I remember I do	5	10.0
Appropriate Time for BSE in Post menopausal Women		
On the fixed day of each month	32	46.0
Any time	6	12.0
Don't know	12	24.0
Times for Examine Breast per Month		
One time	37	74.0
Two time	6	12.0
Seldom	7	14.0
Knowledge in Performing BSE *		
Observe the changes occurred in size and shape	45	90
Observe the sign of discharge	40	80
Palpate in circular motion of breast	32	64
Check all the parts of breast	50	100

* Multiple Responses

respondents were higher secondary level and 18% of the respondents was graduate level education. More than half (64%) respondents were completely home maker, 12% were involved in business and 14% respondents were employed.

Table 1 reveals that regarding the meaning of breast cancer, 39 (78%) of the respondents stated growth of extra lump in breast. More than three fourth 82% of the respondent's state breast self-examination is the method of diagnosing breast cancer at early stage and least number of respondents 10% said

mammogram is a diagnosing method of breast cancer at early stage. Regarding the sign and symptoms of breast cancer, more than three fourth (82%) of the respondents answered painless abnormal growth in breast, seventy eight percent (78%) of the respondents answered change in size and shape of the breasts.

Table 2 shows that meaning of BSE, Almost three fourth (72%) of the respondents understood its correct meaning as examination of own breast to check any abnormalities. More than half (60%) of

the respondent's state health workers as source of information on Breast Self Examination followed by media was thirty- six percent (36%). Almost two-third (66%) of the respondents answered need of BSE is for to find out a lump or problem on breast at early stage. Four- fifth (80%) of the respondents gave answer as 7-10days after the first day of the menstrual period is an appropriate time for BSE in pre menopausal women. More than four fifth (90%) of the respondents observe the changes occurred in size and shape during BSE. Whereas 64% respondents palpate breast in circular motion.

DISCUSSION

This study reveals that regarding the meaning of breast cancer, 78% of the respondent's state growth of extra lump in breast. More than 82% of the respondent's state breast self-examination is the method of diagnosing breast cancer at early stage and least number of respondents 10% said mammogram is a diagnosing method of breast cancer at early stage. This finding was inconsistency with the study conducted in Nigeria by Olugbenga et al⁵ revealed that 91.6% knew breast self-examination, 93.2% knew clinical breast examination and only 32.8% knew mammography as a screening method. Regarding the sign and symptoms of breast cancer, more than three fourth (82%) of the respondents answered painless abnormal growth in breast, seventy eight percent (78%) of the respondent knew that change in size and shape. This findings are nearly supported with study of Maqsood et al,⁶ show that (84%) respondents had heard of breast cancer, while 65% knew at least one major sign or symptom of breast cancer. Eighty five percent of respondents believed that early detection of cancer improved survival.

Regarding meaning of BSE, almost three fourth (72%) of the respondents understood its correct meaning as examination of own breast to check any abnormalities. This finding is inconsistent with the study was conducted by Yoo et al⁷ showed that 88.0% women said that they had heard of BSE. It may be due to that the women were not aware in doing breast self-examination. More than half (60%) of the respondents state health workers as source of information on Breast Self-Examination. This finding is inconsistency with the study was conducted by Simi et al. in Iran which showed that 49.4% who performed BSE learned it from medical personnel.⁸ Thirty- six percent (36%) of the

respondents said the source of information was media. This finding is contradictory with the study was conducted by Yoo et al⁷ revealed that 87% respondents said their most common source of information on BSE was the media such as TV, radio and newspapers. It may be due to national health center not focus in Prevention on breast cancer through media. Government has not provided any health education programme to aware in breast self-examination for women through media.

Almost two-third (66%) of the respondents answered need of BSE is for to find out a lump or problem on breast at early stage, whereas twenty two percent (22%) of the respondents were said that it helps to maintain good health. Four- fifth (80%) of the respondents gave answer as seven to 10 days after the first day of the menstrual period is an appropriate time for BSE in pre-menopausal women. Almost two third (64%) of the respondents answered that appropriate time for BSE in post-menopausal is on the fixed day of each month where as 12% respondents said anytime for perform BSE. This finding is contradictory with the study was conducted by Oladimeji et al⁹ showed that 61.7% women strongly agreed that BSE is a method of screening for breast cancer. 36.3% reported that the best time for a woman to perform BSE was 'anytime'.

Nearly three fourth (74%) of the respondent responded correctly about times for examine breast per month i.e. one time. This finding is contradictory with the study was conducted in Cameron by Suh et al¹⁰ revealed that 35% reporting performing BSE monthly and 12.5% performing it six monthly. More than four fifth (90%) of the respondents observe the changes occurred in size and shape during BSE. Whereas (64%) respondent palpate breast in circular motion. Similar study conducted by Nde et al¹¹ finding was inconsistent with this study Very few (9.0%) of the respondents actually knew how to perform BSE.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it is concluded that respondents were aware on breast self-examination but confused on time and BSE performing in circular movement. Most of the respondents have no awareness in mammogram for screening breast cancer. Women are ignoring on performing BSE due to lack of details knowledge on disease and due to lack of awareness.

More extensive awareness programme on breast self-examination should be provided by educational package among reproductive age group women to prevent breast cancer and reduce women morbidity and mortality rate.

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