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**Assessing the Awareness Regarding the Risk Factors of Cervical Cancer among Women in Gampaha District, Sri Lanka**

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**Background:** Cervical cancer is a malignant tumour that arises in the uterine cervix, which has been identified as the second leading cause of cancer deaths among women around the world including Sri Lanka. A sexually contagious pathogen, the Human Papillomavirus (HPV), is often accountable as the aetiology. Having multiple sexual encounters, engagement in risky sexual behaviour, including the usage of oral contraceptives and possessing a compromised immune system are considered as risk factors.

**Objectives:** To assess the awareness regarding the risk factors of cervical cancer among women in the Gampaha district, Sri Lanka.

**Methods:** A descriptive, cross-sectional study was conducted using a close-ended, self-administered online questionnaire, distributed among 150 women aged between 18-50 years in Gampaha district. A convenience sampling technique was used. Data were analyzed using the Microsoft Excel and the SPSS software version 25.0.

**Results:** Out of the total, 84% of the participants were aware of cervical cancer, while 16% were not. Majority of the study participants (56%) were aware of the cervical cancer risk factors. Furthermore, among the 56% of the study subjects, 76 % of the women identified unsafe sexual practices as one of the major risk factors. It was also identified that the respondents believed in; quitting smoking (2.7%), avoiding unsafe sexual practices (10.7%), obtaining the HPV vaccination (32.7%) and undergoing Pap smear test (19.3%), as some of the precautions that could greatly reduce the chance of the developing cervical cancer.

**Conclusions:** Even though, majority of the study subjects were aware of the cervical cancer and their risk factors, the results of this study cannot be generalized to the population due to the small sample size. Therefore, awareness programmes should be conducted in the community to provide further information on the risk factors, disease prognosis and severity, enabling women to take the necessary precautions in the future.

**Keywords:** *Awareness, Cervical cancer, Risk factors, Sri Lanka, Women*