

OP 07**Prevalence and Perceived Associated Factors of Lower Back Pain in Nurses, Gampaha District, Sri Lanka**

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Background: Lower back pain is one of the commonest occupationally caused musculoskeletal diseases among nurses globally. Mostly nurses working in Intensive Care Units are more prone to this condition. Risk factors for causing lower back pain can be categorized into individual risk factors and occupational risk factors. Occupational risk factors consist of physical and psychological origin.

Objectives: To investigate the perceived prevalence and associated factors of lower back pain among nurses working in the Gampaha district, Sri Lanka.

Methods: This was a descriptive, cross-sectional study conducted during October 2020 among 132 female registered nurses, aged between 20-55 years and who worked for at least one year at a hospital in Gampaha district. A simple random sampling method was used. An online survey was conducted using a researcher prepared, self-administered questionnaire. The data were analyzed using Microsoft Excel and SPSS version 20.0.

Results: The study sample consisted of 132 (82.5%) female and 28 (17.5%) male nurses. Results showed a 61.3% prevalence of back pain among the population, while 38.7% reported not having back pain at present. Besides individual risk factors which were commonly identified, sustained sitting (59.9%), frequent bending (59.2%), lifting heavy objects (32%), inadequate rest (62.4%), heavy workload (57.4%) bad posture for a long time (51.9%), sudden movements (35.2%), lifting heavy loads (27.8%) and other factors (7.2%) were identified.

Conclusions: Lower back pain is a common health issue among nurses in Gampaha district, showing 61.3% of prevalence among the study population. Perceived associated factors for the occurrence of lower back pain identified in the study were inadequate rest with the heavy workload, sustained sitting, bad postures for a long time, frequent bending, lifting heavy objects, and sudden movements.

Keywords: *Lower back pain, Nurses, Prevalence, Risk factors*