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Awareness on the Screening Methods of Breast Cancer Among Females in Colombo District, Sri Lanka

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Background: Breast cancer is considered as the commonest cancer that affects women. Due to the critical escalation of breast cancer incidence, it has become vital to inform the community regarding breast cancer manifestations, risk factors, and early detection methods.

Objectives: To assess the awareness regarding signs and symptoms and screening methods of breast cancer among females aged 20-40 years in the Colombo District

Methods: A descriptive, cross-sectional survey was carried out. A closed-ended questionnaire was distributed among conveniently selected 400 women, aged 20-40 years in Colombo District. Results were analyzed to determine the correlation between the level of awareness of screening methods and demographics. Responses obtained from questions regarding awareness were analyzed using an assessment scale.

Results: Awareness on breast cancer signs and symptoms was not satisfactory among the public although 72.8% of the individuals were aware of the discharge from the nipple, only 46.6% and 50.4% respectively were aware of the skin's texture, and redness and swelling. Considering screening methods, even though 77.4% of participants were aware of mammography, only 59% were aware of other screening methods. There was a positive correlation between awareness of screening methods for breast cancer and the level of education ($p < 0.001$), however, there was no correlation of that with the age ($p = 0.55$).

Conclusions: It was evident that the overall awareness level of breast cancer screening methods is not satisfactory. There is a positive relationship, as per evidence between education level and the awareness level of screening methods in women but not the age. Further research has to be conducted to find the effectiveness of awareness raising campaigns of breast cancer screening methods among females in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Awareness, Breast cancer, Prevalence, Screening methods*