

Breast Cancer Knowledge among Bahraini Women Attending Primary Health Care Centers

Majida Fikree, MD, MSc* Randah R Hamadeh, BSc, MSc, D Phil (Oxon)**

Objective: To evaluate breast cancer knowledge among Bahraini women aged 20 years and more attending primary health care centers.

Setting: Primary health care.

Design: Cross sectional descriptive study.

Method: Three hundred Bahraini women attending the primary health care clinics were interviewed from 1st February to 31st May 2005. A multistage sample was selected with a cluster sampling technique for the selection of one health center from each region; five health centers were selected. The sample was stratified according to the percentage of females residing in each region. A semi-structured questionnaire was used for interviewing the study participants.

Result: Seventeen (5.6%) women knew more than half of the correct answers, and the mean "Percent Knowledge Index" was 32.1% ± 12.7%. Newspapers, television, radio, were identified as the main source of knowledge of breast cancer. Highly educated women were more knowledgeable about breast cancer ($p=0.002$), diagnostic modalities ($p=0.008$), and risk factors ($p<0.0001$). Women with positive family history of breast cancer knew more about treatment modalities than those without a history ($p=0.017$). Moreover, no significant differences were found between the general knowledge and its subtypes among women with positive or negative personal history of breast complaints.

Conclusion: Breast cancer knowledge was deficient among Bahraini women. Efforts to improve women's education should be encouraged. Breast cancer should be included as a subject in the high school curricula, with emphasis on modifiable risk factors. The maximum use of media should be encouraged in breast cancer campaigns.

Bahrain Med Bull 2011; 33(3):