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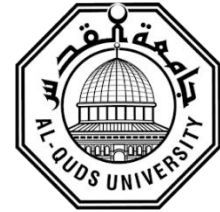
Breast Cancer Knowledge and Practice of Breast Self-Examination among Female Al-Quds University Students

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Background: Among most nations throughout the world, breast cancer is the most frequently publicly detected malignancy in women. In order to increase women's awareness, and knowledge of their breast situation and aid in the early detection of any breast abnormalities, breast self-examination (BSE) is a beneficial screening technique. This is a study designed to evaluate the level of understanding of BC, and BSE among female university students. A self-administered questionnaire was employed to gauge knowledge of breast cancer and associated topics. The study involved 202 students, 32.8% of whom were from Health professions majors, and 14.9% among them had a history of breast cancer in their families. Nearly all of the students (98.5%) were already familiar with breast cancer, having learned about it from a variety of sources, including social media as a major source (91%), educational establishments (76.1%), and other sources. Good knowledge was found for some signs, symptoms (like a lump in the breast (94%)), and risk factors of breast cancer (like a family history of BC (88%)); however, average knowledge (59%) was found for techniques for early diagnosis and care, and the procedure for BSE and 49% know when to perform it, yet only 12.9% actually execute it on a regular basis. Not having breast issues was the most barrier to BSE practice (79.9%), followed by lack of knowledge (37.1%). To raise knowledge regarding BC and BCE use, a training program should be put into place.

Objectives: We did this research to find out how aware and knowledgeable our university female students are about breast cancer, both its symptoms and risks, and most importantly, how experienced they are with BSE application.



Methods: cross-sectional method

Results: There were 202 female participants in total, the majority of the participants are single (92.5%), ages between 17-23(97%), health profession students (32.8%), high average in their first year (29.4%), and half of participants mother's education was university level (50%). The majority (98.5%) of participants have heard of breast cancer, but only 57.9% of them have knowledge about the first signs and about half (52.5%) think that the most at-risk group are women between 20-40 ages and a good percentage of them (44.6%) have good knowledge about the importance of early detection. Although 59.9% of the students know how to BSE, only 12.9% practice it. Most of them have average information about screening methods and early detection, and 49% think that the most appropriate time to detect is monthly (after menstruation). only 14.9% of the students had a family history of BC, but most (61.4%) will monitor the disease if they had a history of it. Following their knowledge of self-examination, a sizable portion of them (62.4%) are knowledgeable about imaging tests (mammograms), and there is no significant difference in knowledge between the specializations according to the chi-square test. There was a very large consensus among the students that the most important risk factors are the presence of a family history (88.1%) and exposure to radiation (86.7%), in addition to some important risk factors like alcohol consumption, smoking, and eating habits. And with regard to the symptoms and signs associated with the disease, we found that a very large percentage (94.1%) agreed that the most Important sign is the presence of a lump in the breast, followed by a difference in the size of the breast (88.1%), and other important signs.

Conclusion: In general, female students have good knowledge of Breast cancer disease and its connected topics. But, there is still a knowledge gap about BC's early identification, management, and BSE method. If the students are taught and informed about the procedures for practicing BSE, there will be an increase in the frequency of practice among them. This emphasizes the significance of implementing a training program to raise awareness of BC and BSE, and this requires national and globular efforts.

Keywords: Breast cancer, Breast Self-Examination