



KNOWLEDGE, AWARENESS AND PREVENTION OF CERVICAL CANCER AMONG WOMEN ATTENDING A TERTIARY CARE HOSPITAL IN INDORE, INDIA

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Abstract

Background: Cervical cancer is one of the most common cancers among women worldwide, with highest mortality in India. The incidence and mortality of cervical cancer can be reduced by screening women for precancerous lesion and by administration of human papilloma virus vaccine to adolescent girls. Knowledge of the women about cervical cancer and awareness about its prevention are the key factors that determine their utilization of screening services.

Methods: A cross sectional survey of women attending Gynaecology Out-Patient Department (OPD) in a tertiary care hospital in Indore was conducted. Information about their knowledge of cervical cancer, awareness of its prevention and their socio demographic characters were collected.

Results: Mean age of the study population was 40.45 ± 12 years. Less than half of the study population (178, 44.5%) knew about cervical cancer. Less than one-fourth of the population knew about screening services for prevention of cervical cancer, and majority (389, 97.2%) were not aware of vaccination as prevention for cervical cancer.

Conclusion: Our study population shows poor knowledge about cervical cancer and is unaware of the concept of prevention. Hence extensive health education to the public is needed regarding cervical cancer and its prevention.

INTRODUCTION

Cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer in women worldwide and the second most common in Indian women. India alone carries 23% of the global burden of cervical cancer. In India, human-based cervical cancer screening is generally not available in most regions due to the competitive healthcare priorities, inadequate financial resources and limited number of trained providers. Thus, most cases are found in advanced stages of the disease, thus leading to increased mortality and reduced survival. A variety of testing options such as cytology, visual-based testing and high-risk HPV testing are available. Several different studies have looked at the effectiveness of comparative evaluation of different tests. Three important randomized controlled trials from India have demonstrated the effectiveness of one-time screening with HPV DNA, tests and VIA by trained nurses and four times VIA tests by trained health professionals, reducing deaths from cervical cancer. . Prevention of cervical cancer by double-dose HPV vaccine and early detection of cervical cancer lesions in eligible people through appropriate screening and treatment in the form of travel and 'screening and treatment' appears to provide a modest median income, countries including India.

OBJECTIVES:

- To assess the knowledge regarding the cervical cancer among women.
- To determine the effectiveness of structured teaching programme on cervical cancer among women.
- To associate the post test knowledge and attitude on cervical cancer with their selected demographic variables.
- To correlate the knowledge with Pre test and Post test score on cervical cancer among women.

HYPOTHESIS:

H₁: There will be a significant difference between pre and post test knowledge after structured teaching programme on cervical cancer among women.

H₂: There will be a significant correlation between Knowledge on cervical cancer among women.

H₃: There will be a significant association between the knowledge on cervical cancer and background features among women.

METHODS AND MATERIAL

This cross sectional study was conducted in Index Medical College and Hospital, which is a tertiary care hospital in rural setting in Indore with more than 90% of the patients coming from surrounding rural communities. For the purpose of sample size calculation statistical software open At 95% confidence level, 80% power and relative precision of 4.5% the Section required sample size calculated on the basis of awareness of 72%. Four hundred women attending the Gynaecology department were recruited over three months.

With monthly turnover of 2,000 patients, two days were randomly chosen in a week. Employing systemic random sampling every fifth patient attending the gynaecology department was included in the study. Known cases of cervical cancer and women who had undergone hysterectomy were excluded from the study. Informed consent was taken and the women were interviewed using structured questionnaire. Blinding of the subjects was not required as no intervention was made and it was a cross-sectional study. The study protocol was approved by the Institution ethics committee.

RESULT

The mean age of women in the study population was 40.45 ± 12 years. Less than half of the study population was aware of cervical cancer and only one-third of the women had knowledge about its risk factors and symptoms Smoking cigarettes (10.3%), long term use of oral contraceptive pill (16.3%), poor genital hygiene (7.5%), having a sexual partner with multiple partners (15%) were considered the major risk factors for cervical cancer. Of the symptoms of cervical cancer, bleeding during or after sex (15.3%), vaginal bleeding after menopause (10.3%), pain during sex (10%) and persistent low back pain (9.8%) were considered more frequently by the women. Only 7.3% of the women considered themselves at risk of cervical cancer.

CONCLUSION

Though cervical cancer is the leading cancer among women in Indore, our study has shown that they are ignorant about this completely preventable disease. Hence,

extensive health education to the public is needed to improve their knowledge with an emphasis on the fact that both vaccination and screening are the new standards for prevention of cervical cancer, as HPV vaccination prevents most of the cervical cancer and screening can detect precancerous lesions which can be mitigated by treatment. Also utilization of the services of media like television, newspaper and radio can have massive impact in improving the knowledge.

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