

Awareness about breast and cervical cancers among nursing students in Beni-Suef University

Background and objective: Breast and cervical cancers represent a public health concern since they result in high mortality and disability rates. The aim of our study was to assess the knowledge of nursing students in Beni-Suef University about both Breast and cervical.

Subjects and methods: A total of 500 students representing all scholastic years from the Technical Institute of Nursing (both 2 years of post-high school nursing education), Beni-Suef University, Egypt, participated in this study that was conducted during the 1st semester of the academic year 2017/2018. The knowledge of the students was assessed using a self-administered questionnaire. The assessment included knowledge of students about 4 aspects; risk factors, manifestations, screening, and management of breast and cervical cancers.

Results: The mean age of the students was 19.2 ± 0.7 years, and most of them (77.6%) were females. Precisely, 43% had optimal knowledge about breast cancer; 43.8% risk factors, 52.4% manifestations, 27.8% screening, and 48% management, while only 29% of students had optimal knowledge about cervical cancer; 21.8% risk factors, 38.2% manifestations, 12.4% screening, and 43.6% management. None of the studied personal characteristics showed association with the knowledge of students whether regarding breast or cervical cancers ($p > .05$). Healthcare givers, TV, and the Internet were the most commonly reported sources of knowledge about breast and cervical cancers: 42%, 33.2%, and 21.2%, respectively.

Conclusion and recommendations: Students lacked the required knowledge about breast and cervical cancers. In particular, knowledge scores of students about screening for both cancers were the lowest. Further studies should focus on improving the knowledge of nursing students using awareness programs or educational modules.

Keywords: Knowledge, Breast cancer, Cervical cancer, Nursing students