

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS FROM PAKISTAN PROSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Breast cancer is considered as one of the deadly disease for women around the globe. More than one Million ladies every year across the globe are diagnosed with this deadly disease .At some stage of life .According to estimation 1 out 9 ladies in Pakistan will develop breast cancer . In all Asian countries ladies from Pakistan have higher chances of breast cancer.In order to cope this deadly disease developed countries set national cancer registries which registered the newly diagnosed cancer patient.Which is very useful in order to know the factors the help in creating cancer .There is no setup of this kind is available at national level in Pakistan. In Pakistan mostly women have no knowledge regarding the initial stage of that disease and they not pay attention during the initial stage of that disease. Most of the ladies visit hospitals at the last stage of, at which doctors are unable to do anything and give proper treatment Most of the Pakistani females hesitate to talk about breast cancer. So the purpose of this paper is to give awareness regarding the breast cancer, highlight the symptoms of the initial stage, it treatment and major causes of this deadly disease. Also suggest that government and social organizations run awareness programs to educate the females regarding that disease in rural areas and special to the young girls which are now studying in the colleges and universities.

Key words: Breast Cancer, Epidemiology, Symptoms.

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INTRODUCTION

Cancer is known as non transmittable disease which is now emerge as the most common cause of human deaths, worldwide.⁶ Breast cancer is the most frequently identified disease and the consider as the fifth most common reason for death in females around the globe.¹⁴

75% of all cancers can be controlled whereas rest 25% can be treated if they were diagnosed in the initial stages. In the start of this century above one million ladies were diagnosed with breast cancer from globally in year 2000, 373,000 ladies expired and 519,000 ladies expired in the year 2004.⁸

It was estimated that in the year 2000, 189,000 expiries in the developed countries and 184,000 in developing countries due to breast cancer.¹⁰

In Asian countries, including Pakistan, the escalating rate of breast cancer gives an alarming

indicator. Currently in Pakistan growth rate of breast cancer is 2.5 times more than other its neighboring countries like Iran and India.¹⁴ In order to control that disease developing countries need to work on priority basis to give cancer awareness.¹¹ Since 1980 breast cancer diagnosis conducted in developed on regular basis. Where as in the developing countries situation is totally different death rate because of breast cancer is increasing day by day.³ In Pakistan due to lack of knowledge and awareness data related to death because of breast cancer is insufficient. Out of 100,000 Pakistani women 50 were victims of this deadly disease where as in indian ladies this ratio is 19 out of 100,000.¹² It is the consider as the second most deadly disease in Pakistani women mainly due to genetic mutation and increasing age (American Cancer Society, 2013).¹²

Elaborates that among every nine women, one woman is expected to be the sufferer of breast

cancer and this ratio increases after the menopausal age of 45 years. In Asia Pacific Pakistan has the highest breast cancer rate as 1 out of 9 female in the state is at risk of the disease, every year 40,000 women loss their lives due to breast cancer in Pakistan.

CAUSES OF BREAST CANCER

AGE

On of the major factor of breast cancer is age.¹⁴ Most of middle age ladies in Pakistan suffer from this deadly disease with average age of 48 years where in western countries mostly ladies after 60 years diagnose by this disease. Risk of developing breast cancer is higher in aged women.

HORMONAL FACTORS

Risk of breast cancer increase in the case of menstruation at very young age and menopause in late age. Risk of breast cancer is more in Women without kids and women which give birth to first child after 30 years. Prolonged hormone therapy increase more risk.

BENIGN BREAST DISEASE

Those ladies which have non-cancerous knobs in the breasts have more chances of breast cancer as compare to others.

FOOD AND PLUMPNESS

According to recent studies fatty ladies have more chances than of breast cancer. Women which gain weight before menopause have high risk of breast cancer. Diet with high fats raise the chances of breast cancer where as vegetarian diet reduce the chances and provide more protection contrary to this disease.

FAMILY HISTORY

Family history is also one of the major causes of this deadly disease. 25% of cases of breast cancer are due to family history. Two most common genes which cause the breast cancer are known as breast cancer 1 (BRCA1) and breast cancer 2 (BRCA2) genes. Changes in the above mentioned genetic factors bring high risk of ovarian and breast cancer. A woman may carry BRCA 1 or 2 genetic factor in case of more than one first

degree family relatives of her suffer from breast or ovarian cancer (particularly under 50 years age).

The treatment of breast cancer is dependent on the diagnosed stage. It is hard to avert breast cancer, but if it detected earlier than it is possible. It is useful for ladies to conduct monthly breastself-examination, yearly clinical breast examination and go for mammogram once in a year. Arise of lump on the breast, change in colour of skin and variation in nipples consider as acommunal symptoms of breast cancer which give alarm to consult the physician as early as possible.

BREAST CANCER SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Most common type of cancer in ladies now a day is breast cancer. This disease not limit itself to any age as per statistics it is estimated that women with range from 1 in 8 to 1 in 15 will be identified with this deadly disease at any stage of life. In Most of the cases breast cancer is treatable. Fruitful treatment depends upon early detection and proper treatment Some guidelines are given by the international cancer community in order to provide support, it divided ladies in two groups depend upon age - <40 and above 40 years.

- A new area of coagulating of new area in the breast .
- lump presence in the axilla/ arm pit area
- Misrepresentation of nipple
- Release of blood from nipple
- Retraction of skin or lumpiness
- Fixation of skin to an original lump
- Skinsoreness
- Thickness of nipple area skin
- Warmth Feeling on reddish and clotted skin area
- Pustule of skin that does not cause any pain
- Rashes on the breast particularly area near the nipple with scratches.
- Aching in the breast which move from arm pitto the arm and neck

STAGES OF CANCER

Cancer is characterized into four stages (stage I,

stage II, stage III, stage IV). Stage I is the indication of initial and stage IV is the most critical stage of this disease. In USA among different cancer types breast cancer is the major reported cancer in ladies.⁴ Because of its frequency in women and psychological impact Breast cancer is the considered feared cancer.⁹ After lung and stomach it is the most common cancer in the globe, whereas in women it is the most common cancer which diagnosis rate of 21% new cases worldwide.¹¹ In developed countries lifetime risk for ladies is about 6.2% and 2.2% in developing states.¹¹ Rate of incidence of breast cancer in developing countries is increasing.¹⁻²

Survival of patient at the stage IV diagnosis is up to five years IV (10%). But if detected in earlier stages chances of endurance (up to 5 years) is 85%. Survival depends upon the age of the patient and the stage of diagnosis and is restored for young ladies (except for ladies less than thirty years age at the time of diagnosis). Survival by stage of diagnosis is very significant predictive variable. Five-year survival rate for the localized cases is 96.8% for SEER registries in USA but for final stage is only 20.6%.⁵ Whereas diagnosis stage is noticeable in the developing countries.¹³ In Pakistani female most common cancer is breast cancer round about 1 out of 5 female is diagnosed by this disease.⁵ Frequency of breast cancer in Pakistan is same as in other countries.⁷⁻¹⁶

In Pakistan the level of increasing incidence of breast cancer are higher as compared to other countries.⁵ Statistics shows that aver one to two percent Pakistani woman would be diagnosed by breast cancer at the age of 65.¹⁶ It's hard to describe the epidemiology of Breast Cancer in Pakistan.

FACTORS CAUSES BREAST CANCER IN PAKISTAN

It is depressing to see many Pakistani women died because of breast cancer. If its early detected and properly treated than can be controlled. Breast cancer cases in Pakistan now registering at alarming rate and uncontrollable because of change in lifestyles and urbanization.

Environmental and inherited risk factors play important role in the caused of Breast cancer. Advancement in technology make it possible to study DNA cells more closer and give better understanding about the breast cancer genetics. This advance knowledge help to discover better treatment for breast cancer and help in giving a new life to the patients. The death rate because of breast cancer decreased by 25% since 1990's in USA and Europe. All this is due to screening mammography and improvement of treatment technologies utilization of chemotherapy, hormone therapy and recent invented therapy.

The exact reason behind the cause of breast cancer still under research. Below mentioned factors raise the probabilities of breast cancer development.

Two factors have a strong relationship in the occurrence of breast cancer in Pakistani females. Other factors are overexposure to estrogen due to early periods of 12 years, late menopause after 55 years, late childbirth at 30 years or no childbirth, short time period of postpartum breast feeding for less than 2 years, previous breast benign lesion of one breast that have metastasized to another non-diseased breast and previous chest radiations mostly at the time of adolescence are at a higher risk, due to continuous growth of breast.¹⁴

Advance research shows that environment plays an significant role in causing the breast cancer. For example, high fat diet clues to dense breast tissues, changes in melatonin level due to late night working, use of oral contraceptives, advanced socioeconomic status leads to inactive routines and higher levels of sex hormones in the bloodstream of alcohol consumers and women less than 20 years who smoke or before delivering a baby.¹⁵ Further-more, lack of medical services for appropriate treatment and shortage of female oncologist is a concerning issue in Pakistan (American Cancer Society, 2013).

Family history is one of the major cause of breast cancer. Late marriages, late children and not feeding the kids contributed to increase in breast

cancer cases. Women try to have kids sooner (before 30 years of age) rather than later in life, breast feed their babies, limited use of red meat, prefer to take fruits and vegetables, Try to avoid contact to pesticides and long use of antibiotics.

BREAST CANCER TREATMENT

Various types of treatments available for breast cancer patients. Local treatment are surgery and radiation therapy. Systemic actions include chemotherapy and hormonal therapy. chemotherapy and hormonal therapy go to different body parts, Their goal is to kill cancer cells which are spreading from breast.

The most advance treatment for breast cancer is called targeted therapy. In order to test new drugs clinical trials are also offered. Patients are heartened for clinical trials which will not helpful for them but for other ladies with the same disease and future generations.

No specific treatment fits for every woman. Treatment choice depends upon various factors i.e age, menopausal position, tumor stage, hormone and Her2 receptor status of the tumor.

Surgery is very common treatment. Tumor size and its location define the degree of surgery. Surgical procedure may mastectomy (elimination of the breast) or lumpectomy (exclusion of the lump).

After mastectomy or lumpectomy rebuilding of breast is called breast reconstruction. If tumor is big or if the female not wish to remove her breast than before the surgery chemotherapy or hormonal therapy can be done which reduce the size of tumor and help the surgeon to protect the breast after mastectomy. Selection of chemotherapy type depends upon the patient stage. Many highly effective treatment plans available which differ number of drugs used and dosage and duration of treatment.

Chemotherapy side effects control by proper care and change in routine life. Aged ladies in good health can get chemotherapy benefit same as young ladies.

Hormonal therapy wedges the capability of the female hormones estrogen and progesterone which give growth to cancer cells. If the woman's cancer cells show occurrence of the receptors than this drug works.

Radiation therapy is restricted to one part and is commonly well borne. Side effects of this treatment are limited to the treated area. It is considered as extremely active procedure to kill cancer cells of the breast.

Targeted therapies like the drug Herceptin, mark precise elements of cancer cells such as proteins. These proteins permit cancer cells to cultivate in an irregular way.

HOW TO REDUCE THE RISK OF BREAST CANCER

By keeping a healthy weight, being physically active, breast-feeding their children, proper check-up for prevention and primary treatment of the disease women decrease their risk of breast cancer. Regular exercise of at least 30 minutes' walk, swimming etc every day should be included in part of daily activities. Evading tight fitting bras and monthly self-examination from age 20. Risk of breast cancer becomes double in women who eat higher levels saturated fats had as compared to other. Women try to learn appropriate procedure to conduct breast self-examination and perform it monthly. At the age of 40 all ladies need a baseline mammogram. Women above 49 go for screening mammogram after every two years.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Basic problem is lack of awareness, ignorance and associated stigma that cause the main growth of breast cancer. Because of late childbearing, short period of postpartum breast-feeding and the general living habits increase the risk of breast cancer in young women. There are many cases in which breast cancer is diagnosed in young women of age 20.

Globally the month of October is recognized as 'Pink Ribbon - Breast Cancer Awareness' The Pink Ribbon Promotion is considered as globally

breast cancer awareness program. Its time to give awareness to young girls regarding every minor detail about breast cancer. Pakistan has to overwhelm with many barricades such as illiteracy, misconception, social stigma and lack of medical facilities. In the month of October globally different program for awareness of breast cancer were conducted. Government must launch breast cancers awareness in the women colleges and universities so that young females get awareness about this disease with the help of education and health department. In order to provide facilities to the women at their door steps Govt establish screening clinics for ladies and also suggest the district hospitals to go for screening in the rural areas because major population of Pakistan is living in the rural areas. At national level there is need to develop screening and prevention strategies for breast-cancer. In Pakistan women hesitate to discuss about that disease. Govt suggest the nurses and doctors to run awareness campaigns at the Rural Health Centers and Basic Health Units.

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AUTHORSHIP AND CONTRIBUTION DECLARATION

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