



Breast Cancer among Pakistani Women

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Dear Editor-in-Chief

Cancer is a family of diseases and breast cancer is a single disease. Breast tissues are made up of milk production glands, which called lobules and the ducts, which connect the lobules to the nipple. The remaining part of the breast is composed of with lymphatic, connective and fatty tissues. Breast cancer is the most prevalent type of cancer in the world. Throughout worldwide breast cancer poses a major health risk for women. Every year, one million women are diagnosed with breast cancer (1). Breast cancer is the most common cancer among female and it is estimated that over 1.38 million women according to the 2008 GLOBOCAN of WHO (2).

Everyone is affected by cancer the old and young, the poor and rich, children and women. It is creating sever financial and social problems on families in Pakistan. Pakistan is a developing country and most of the population is living in rural areas. In rural areas of Pakistan, no formal health infrastructure is available for rural population. Illiteracy is also a major cause of breast cancer among women because women have no awareness about personal hygienic conditions. Most of the Pakistani women have no proper access to the medical facilities due to gender-based discrimination. More than half of the population is based upon women. Sexually transmitted diseases and breast cancer has become very common disease among women in Pakistan. In rural areas of Pakistan, socio-economic conditions are responsible

for the poor health of the women. At some stage of life, 1 in 9 Pakistani women has become the patient of breast cancer (3).

In Asia, Pakistan has the highest rate of breast cancer. Young women also present at advanced stage of breast cancer, which has negative effect on prognosis. In rural areas, rural women are developing a great number of breast cancers every year because it is an inherited disease, which is transmitted from mother to daughter. Pakistani rural as well as urban women are facing cervical, ovarian and uterine cancers (4). Screening centers are not available in Pakistan to diagnose various type of cancer and every year a great number of women are dying due to breast cancer and Hepatitis-C.

Mammogram is a screening program, which is very helpful and effective in the detection of the disease. Most of the population cannot afford this screening program because it is very expensive. The simplest technique is Breast self-examination (BSE) to check one-self monthly. Trained medical practitioners and nurses at health centers teach the women, how to use Breast self-examination technique once a month. Majority of the Pakistani women are living in poor conditions and cannot afford expensive screening tests. Therefore, they can use easily this technique by themselves and detection breast cancer at early stage.

In the above table, Pakistan's ranking is showed according to the type of cancer in the world.

Ranking which are showed in red color shows this type of cancer is prevailing rapidly and in purple color shows that this type of cancer is nearly to an end. According to the above statistics, oral cancer is also spreading rapidly in Pakistan.

Table 1: Pakistan cancer rank by type (5)

Type	Rate	World Rank
Breast Cancer	19.33	58
Oral Cancer	9.40	10
Lung Cancer	7.81	121
Stomach Cancer	6.66	97
Cervical Cancer	6.56	78
Esophagus Cancer	6.17	42
Lymphomas	4.85	106
Colon-Rectum Cancer	4.08	149
Luekemia	3.61	112
Bladder Cancer	2.86	80
Liver Cancer	2.69	172
Prostate Cancer	2.53	164
Ovary Cancer	2.36	81
Other Neoplasm's	1.57	147
Pancreas Cancer	0.90	172
Uterin Cancer	0.51	142
Skin Cancer	0.31	170

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