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## Assessment of the level of knowledge about breast cancer and related symptoms, screening and treatment

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**Objectives:** Breast cancer is the most common cancer for female in Saudi. According to National Campaign for Breast Cancer Awareness, the majority of patients in our country present with early age and late stage cancer. As the only way to prevent the progression of breast cancer is the early detection of breast cancer, we conducted study to assess the knowledge about breast cancer and breast self-examination and knowledge about breast cancer treatment and its side effect among female lived in Riyadh. We analyzed the knowledge about breast cancer and breast self-examination with the demographic variable. Also, we compared between the knowledge of the breast cancer treatment and its side effect for the women diagnosed or had family history of breast cancer with those who had not.

**Methods:** It is cross-sectional study targeting Saudi female who lived in Riyadh and their age ranged from (18-60) years old, in order to assess the knowledge about breast cancer and breast self-examination and knowledge about breast cancer treatment and its side effect by distribution of self-administered questionnaire.

**Results:** Out of 500 participants, 395 were 18-40 years old, 57.9% (278) had university degree and 42.7% of participants had monthly income from 5000-10000 SR. 17.9% (86) had family history of breast cancer while only 5.6% (27) were diagnosed with breast cancer. Regarding the knowledge about breast cancer symptoms, 84.8% (407) of our participants recognized that breast lump is one of breast cancer symptoms. For the knowledge of breast self-examination (BSE), 57.3% (275) knew how to perform BSE, while 41.7% (200) performed it monthly. The knowledge of breast cancer symptoms and BSE was significantly associated with level of education and monthly income of participants, while the practice of BSE was only related with level of education. Regarding the knowledge about side effects of different methods used in breast cancer treatment between groups who have been diagnosed with breast cancer or had family history with it and another group who hadn't: About mastectomy, both groups agreed that change in body image is the most undesirable side effect by (62.7% and 55.6%), respectively. While in chemotherapy, hair loss was the most undesirable side effect in both groups (52.9% and 47.9%). Moreover 42.2% and 36.8% believed that skin ulcers were the most unwanted side effect of radiation therapy. It was also observed that 63.7% and 69.3% of respondents from both groups agreed that cervical cancer was the most undesirable side effect of hormonal therapy.

**Conclusion:** This study demonstrates a high level of knowledge about breast cancer symptoms and BSE among Saudi women who lived in Riyadh, particularly in women with high education levels and high income. On the other hand, there is a need to encourage women to practice BSE and increase knowledge about benefit of early detection of breast cancer.

### Biography

I'm Maram, fourth year medical student at King Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. I have no publication until now but I have two research one of them in the oncology and the other in pharmacology and I wait for publication.

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