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The link between hormonal replacement therapy (HRT) use and breast cancer risk

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Statement of the Problem: Over 2200 of new breast cancer cases are diagnosed annually in Cuba, and it is estimated that 1 in 14 women will develop the disease. The highest incidence occurs among women between 45-65 years of age, and is the second leading cause of death in women. Hormonal replacement therapy (HRT) is any form of hormone therapy wherein the patient, in course of treatment receives hormones either to supplement lack of naturally occurring hormones or to substitute them. There are two main types of HRT: Combination HRT which contains the hormones estrogen and progesterone, and estrogen-only HRT, both of which have been linked to different effects on breast cancer risk. Combination HRT increases breast cancer risk by about 75% even when used for only a short time, while the estrogen-only HRT increases risk when used for more than 10 years. Current or recent past users of hormonal replacement therapy have a higher risk of being diagnosed with breast cancer. Before the link between HRT use and breast cancer link was established, many postmenopausal women took HRT for many years to ease menopausal symptoms such as hot flashes and fatigue and to reduce bone loss. Cuba is not an exception to the significant drop in the number of women taking HRT, since 2002 when research linked the therapy to the risk of developing breast cancer.

Findings: By establishing certain parameters a survey was conducted for a period of time to study the impact of the hormonal in a group of 22 Cuban women above 40 years who were in use of the therapy. It was realized after the intervention that most of the women surveyed were all oblivious of the risk of developing breast cancer through the use HRT, which helped increase their knowledge significantly, with as high as 90.9% of the participants acquiring adequate knowledge about the risk of developing breast cancer through the use of HRT after the survey relative to 13.6% before the intervention program as shown in table.1

Conclusion & Significance: This intervention has been found to be a useful avenue to address this topic, therefore recommendations made for future researches to throw more light on the topic since very little research has been done on it. Recommendations are also so made for early diagnosis, alternative and safer forms of treatment to reduce breast cancer incidence and mortality, since most women have had a positive attitude towards HRT use based on empirical data.

Biography

Wilson Selorm Gobah is from Ghana, and he is very passionate about improving the quality and delivery of healthcare in African. He is currently at 5th year medical student at the University Medical Sciences of Havana, Cuba that is sponsored by a Ghana Government Scholarship program. He was a Participant at the "10th Global Summit on Toxicology and Applied Pharmacology" held during July 20-22, 2017 in Chicago, USA. After the completion of his bachelor's degree program in chemistry from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana, He had the opportunity to work on several scientific researches with the center for scientific and industrial research, Ghana (CSIR). He draws on all these and other experiences, especially, the interaction with patients to shape his perspective on some of the novel ways the standards on healthcare and delivery can be improved.

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