

PP46

Knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding Pap smear test among women in Godigamuwa grama seva division in Ratnapura District, Sri Lanka

Jayaweera KAHN¹, Jayathilake MRS¹

¹*Department of Nursing and Midwifery, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka*

Background: Cervical cancer is the second commonest cancer among women in Sri Lanka, even though it can be preventable through early detection.

Objectives: To describe knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding Pap smear test among women in Godigamuwa grama seva division in the Ratnapura district.

Methods: A quantitative descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted with 250 women in Godigamuwa grama seva division in Ratnapura District using an interviewer-administered questionnaire. Data were analysed using SPSS version 23. Descriptive statistics were calculated.

Results: The mean age of participants was 46.45(SD=9.002) years. Although 86% of participants had heard about cervical cancer, only 74% had heard about Pap smear test. More than half (51.2%) received information about Pap smear test from health care professionals. Further, only 36.4% knew that Pap smear test should be done every 5 years. Thus a considerable number of participants (38.4%) had a poor knowledge regarding Pap smear test. Meanwhile, nearly 55% of participants preferred to do the Pap smear test at the well woman clinic in the primary health care centre and 77.2% out of them preferred to do their Pap smear test by a female physician. Besides, the majority of

women (82.4%) were willing to participate in the Pap smear test, but more than 77% of participants thought they were not at risk of getting cervical cancer. Importantly, less than one-third of participants (31.6%) had done Pap smear test, however, only 24.8% out of them had done it every five years.

Conclusions: Based on the study results, knowledge about Pap smear test was not adequate among participating women. Although patients had a positive attitude towards pap smear testing only few underwent the test which means practices towards Pap smear test were not satisfactory. It is necessary to enhance the knowledge regarding Pap smear test particularly the importance of doing Pap smear test and promote good practice among women in the study setting.