

**ATTITUDES AND WILLINGNESS TO UNDERGO A PAP SMEAR TEST
AMONG MARRIED WOMEN IN INGIRIYA MOH AREA, SRI LANKA**

✓ **T.C. Dodangoda* and M.K.D.L. Meegoda**

*Department of Allied Health Sciences, Faculty of Medical Sciences,
University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka
thilankadodangoda@gmail.com

Cancer of the cervix is rated as the second cause of morbidity and mortality among cancer patients in Sri Lanka. Cervical cancer morbidity and mortality can be reduced by primary prevention and early detection strategies. The Pap smear test is a safe and effective screening test which is offered free of charge through well-woman clinics in Sri Lanka, but previous studies have demonstrated poor uptake of Pap smear test.

An interviewer-administered questionnaire was used to conduct a cross-sectional descriptive survey among 35-60 year old married women in Ingiriya MOH area. Cluster sampling was used to select participants from the gramasewa divisions of the selected MOH area. Frequency distribution with percentages was calculated using SPSS.

Mean age of the sample was 46 ± 8.4 years. Of the 456 participants only 41.3% has had a Pap smear test done at least once and most of them (22.6%) were tested at well women clinics. Public Health Midwives were their major source of information (57%). However most of the participants (73.1%) believed that cervical cancer is preventable if it is detected early through a Pap smear test. Further most of them (93.3%) were willing to participate in a screening program. Findings of the attitudinal dispositions for Pap smear test revealed that there was shyness (63%) and fear (52.7%) of vaginal examination among those who had or did not have the Pap smear test. Despite significant proportion of women believing, cervical cancer is preventable if it is detected early through the Pap smear screening test, there was an unacceptably low level of screening. Negligence, shyness and fear were the main obstacles to participate in screening.