

## Awareness about Early Detection Methods, Symptoms and Risk Factors towards Breast and Cervical Cancer among the Female Students

**Nankya Hanifah**

Mulago Paramedical School, Uganda

The study was conducted to ensure knowledge, attitude, awareness about breast and cervical cancer among the female students of Makerere University. This study was carried out from July to September, 2016 among the participants of university female halls, different female hostels and different faculty of the university by using a validated questionnaire which was developed for this study. A total 250 female students, at the age of (18 - 26) years were participated. Collected information was analyzed using SPSS, Graph-pad Prism and MS Excel. The results showed that about 87.6% participants were undergraduate. Most of them come from village (45.6%) and city (36.0%). In case of food intake patterns, it was observed that 35.6% participants eat chips, soft drinks, popcorn everyday; 40.4% eat meat regularly; 24% eat sugar everyday; 27.6% eat fruits and vegetables every day. Among them, 55.6% girls maintained daily 1 hour physical activity; 37.2% did exercise rarely; 34.8% participants rarely do strenuous exercise. About 84.4% respondents have not any family history of cancer; 6%

participants have sister or mother having breast tumor and 7.2% have at least more than one close relative who have cancer. Among the participants, only 0.8% drank alcohol; 1.2% have addiction of smoking cigarette; 15.6% girls wear tight bra; 3.6% have benign breast disease and 2.8% participants have attended in breast or cervical cancer screening programs. The moderate numbers of girls have breast cancer screening practice. Among them, only 28.8% participants have ever heard about BSE (Breast self-examination) and 40.4% have not any knowledge about breast cancer treatment. About 50.8% respondents don't have any knowledge about cervical cancer treatment. The village people are the most risky group. About 17.02% girls recognized weakened immune system as a risk factor of cervical cancer. It can be concluded that, knowledge of participants regarding breast and cervical cancer is poor. Targeted education should be implemented to improve the knowledge of respondents about early detection methods and symptoms of breast and cervical cancer.