

# BREAST SELF EXAMINATION AWARENESS AND PRACTICE AMONG FEMALE NURSES IN BAHAWAL VICTORIA HOSPITAL BAHAWALPUR

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Knowledge about the early diagnosis of breast cancer world help in early diagnosis and treatment. **Objective:** To evaluate the knowledge and practice of nurses about breast self examination in BVH, Bahawalpur, Pakistan. **Methodology:** This cross sectional study was conducted at Bahawal Victoria Hospital, Bahawalpur from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017. Study comprised of total 100 female nurses selected randomly. The tool for data collection was pre designed, pretested, structured and self administered questionnaire to collect the information from constituted study population. The data analyzed by using SPSS version 20. **Results:** Out of 100 respondents 73% has complete knowledge about BSE. Breast self examination was performed by 47%. **Conclusion:** Knowledge and practice of BSE in the female nurses of BVH, Bahawalpur was satisfactory.

**Keyword:** Breast self Examination, Breast cancer, Lump Screening.

## INTRODUCTION

Women's longevity can be threatened by delayed diagnosis of breast cancer.<sup>1</sup> Breast cancer is the most common malignancy and its incidence is on rise in world especially in developing countries which comprises 18% of all female cancers.<sup>1</sup> The awareness of breast cancer preventive methods is crucial in reduction of disease incidence. Breast self examination (BSE) is a simple, inexpensive, safe examination method, which require no invasive intervention and protect women's privacy and can be done at home.<sup>2-6</sup> BSE is reported to be having reasonable sensitivity and specificity so that early diagnosis of breast lump can be done for improved survival.<sup>7,9</sup> Participants who performed monthly BSE reported that they feel more comfortable and has better sensitivity and specificity.<sup>7-10</sup> This study was conducted to assess the knowledge and practices of breast self examination among nurses at Bahawalpur Victoria Hospital, Bahawalpur.

## METHODOLOGY

This cross-sectional study was conducted from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017 in all the wards of Bahawalpur Victoria Hospital, (BVH) Bahawalpur. Study subjects consisted of 100 nurses. To reach the required sample size simple random sampling was done out of 600 nurses. 100 willing female nurses of all ages, working in various wards of the BVH, Bahawalpur were included. Data was collected by introducing a predesigned and pretested Questionnaire.

Questionnaire was designed in such a way to get related knowledge and practices about breast self examination information. Reasons for study were explained to them and privacy was ensured. The information collected included; knowledge about common type of Cancer in female, significance of lump in breast, how to do breast self examination and best time and frequency of BSE. Data were collected and analyzed by using SPSS version 20. Frequencies were calculated and presented in tables. "Satisfactory" knowledge was labelled when represents answered correctly to all questions about knowledge of BSE.

## RESULTS

A total of 100 female nurses included in the study, were interviewed regarding their knowledge and practices for BSE. This study revealed that 73% respondents has satisfactory and 27% of them has poor knowledge regarding BSE. Regarding the educational status, nurses with education above matric has 100% knowledge about BSE and only 98% of nurses, who were matric pass, has knowledge about BSE. (Table I) Nurses of first year has 98% and those of higher designation has 100% knowledge of BSE. (Table II) Majority (79%) of the subjects were unmarried. Ninety three percent of respondents were having the knowledge that carcinoma breast was the most common type of cancer among female. Two percent declared carcinoma uterus and one percent said that carcinoma cervix was the most common cancer. Thirteen percent were of the view

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that BSE should be performed during morning time, 4% were in the favour of evening, 11% during night, 20% during feeding, 8% during bath and 35% at no specific time. Nine percent did not know about this. 32% of respondents performed BSE during night, 23% at no specific time, 19% during morning, 15% during evening and 11% during bathing. Of 70% respondents who knew about BSE; 37% respondents said that it should be performed daily, 37% were in the favour of weekly examination, 22% monthly and 4% fortnightly. 47% showed satisfactory response and 53% showed poor response regarding practice of BSE. (Figure I) It was noted that 38% of respondents performed BSE monthly, 34% weekly, 15% daily, 9% fortnightly and 4% yearly.

**Table I: Response regarding the knowledge of bse according to the educational status of the nurses**

Sr No.	Educational Status	Total no of nurses	Response	
			Satisfactory (%)	Poor (%)
1.	Matric	31	98	2
2.	Intermediate	31	100	0
3.	Graduation	36	100	0
4.	Master	2	100	0

**Figure I: Practices of BSE among nurses**



## DISCUSSION

In this study although 73% of the nurses has satisfactory knowledge about BSE but it was practiced by only 47%. In another study conducted in Saudi Arabia, 81% of women had knowledge and 66% of them practiced it.<sup>8</sup> The difference may be due to higher education level and health consciousness in female nurses of Saudi Arabia as compared to their counterparts in BVH, Bahawalpur.

Buddon,<sup>10</sup> reported in his study that 96% of the nurses practised BSE during a year but only 46% had performed regularly as once per month. One study from Iran revealed that more than 70% of the nurses were aware of BSE as for as its knowledge is concerned and had strong belief that it had definitely beneficial effects. In spite of having knowledge only 6% of them were practising BSE regularly,<sup>11</sup> This study showed that lump in the breast was a causative factor of breast cancer which was reflected on its significant correlation with BSE practice. But in a study conducted in Saudi Arabia nipple discharge was considered to be a factor for its causation.<sup>8</sup> Premenopausal factor was found to be major etiological factor as more than 50% of the ladies with breast cancer diagnosed annually were premenopausal, creating the need to initiate breast cancer screening programmes and educational efforts in this group of population. These efforts include regular and correct BSE, reducing delay after finding suspicious findings, reducing delay by physician in referring suspicious cases, reducing women's delay after referral, teaching the surgeons to do breast examination correctly and reducing their delay in starting treatment. BSE is inexpensive, non-invasive, involves little time and physical energy, is simple and can be performed with out professional help, however, the effectiveness of BSE remains controversial.<sup>12</sup> Medical professionals know about the causes of diseases and have much more training to recognize the warning signs of the disease<sup>13</sup> From a review of literature from different studies it is evident that BSE functions as an effective preventive health behavior and that beliefs and behaviors associated with breast cancer, vary widely regarding ethnicity, age, education and socioeconomic status.<sup>14</sup>

## CONCLUSION

This study showed that Knowledge and practice of BSE among the female nurses of BVH Bahawalpur is satisfactory. To improve the awareness and change the attitude of young women, sensitizing campaign using the audiovisual media should be intensified. It is necessary to perform educational interventions so that BSE could be performed correctly.

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