

ABSTRACT

A community based cross-sectional descriptive study with analytical component was conducted in Minbu during October, 2010 to determine information related to breast cancer among women of reproductive age. An equal proportion of the respondents were selected from the two wards to obtain required sample size 210. Data collection was done by face to face interviews with pre-tested structured questionnaire. The mean age of study women was 32.6 (SD=9.4) years. Most of the respondents (98.1%) had ever heard of breast cancer. But 69.9% of the women knew risk factors of breast cancer, 99% of women were able to identify breast lump as symptom of breast cancer and less than 5% of these women were able to recognize other non-lump symptoms. The most frequently cited treatment method for breast cancer was surgery (100%), followed by radiotherapy (59.1%). Most of the respondents (88.3%) agreed that breast cancer can be curable if there was early detection. Majority of women (91.7%) expressed that breast self examination (BSE) as the method of early detection of breast cancer and half of the women did not know the timing and frequency of BSE. Half of the respondents said that they had never performed BSE. The most frequently cited reason was lack of knowledge (48%). The majority of the respondents in this study had positive attitude towards breast cancer. Lay persons (95.4%) were the commonest source of information on breast cancer followed by printed media (66.9%). Health persons (11.5%) was the less mentioned by the respondents. The chi-square (χ^2) test showed a significant association between age, education, monthly family income with knowledge of breast cancer ($p = <0.05$). The findings showed that information related to breast cancer and BSE among women were inadequate. Targeted education measures should be implemented to improve early detection of breast cancer.