

## A Survey on preventive behaviors of the women's cancer among female students

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**Abstract.** Recently, the prevalence of women's cancer like as uterine cancer, thyroid cancer, breast cancer, and ovarian cancer have rapidly increased in young women. The aim of this study was to investigate preventive behavior of women's cancer. The convenient sample consisted of 93 female students from P university in B city. Data were collected from April to May. The major findings were as follows; Preventive behavior of women's cancer significantly differed according to age, health concern, regular exercise and information of women's cancer. It is needed to help female students to have more interest in health and healthy habits to promote the preventive behaviors.

**Keywords:** Neoplasms, Prevention & Control, Behavior, Female, Students

### 1 Introduction

#### 1.1. Necessity of this study

Cancer incidence rates are increasing due to the westernized diet and the life environment with easily exposed to stress every year. The cancer rate of 2008 has increased 7.8% over 2007. For women, if they reach the average life expectancy of 83 years, 30.5%, in other words three out ten could get cancer[1].

Four major cancers for women include uterine cancer, thyroid cancer, breast cancer, and ovarian cancer in the female reproductive organs. In the past, these cancers mostly occurred in the women between the ages of late forties and early sixties. However, the incidence rate of these cancers in their thirties and unmarried women are gradually increasing due to the tendency of lower age of onset[2].

Because 80% of whole cancers arise from the unhealthy habits, cancer preventive health behavior is necessary to decrease the incidence rate of cancer[3]. Therefore, modifying health behaviors and the habits, preventing the environment and factors that could cause cancers and getting a cancer screening behaviors are strategies to conquer cancer.

University students acquire life habits more freely than the adolescents. They can recognize the unhealthy life habits and modify them to healthy ones. They can be

stimulated to implement health behaviors[4]. It is very important to help the university students to modify undesirable behaviors and acquire health behaviors because the acquired lifestyle during this period influences their health as adults.

It is necessary to understand the actual state of preventive health behavior of female students regarding women's cancer first. If you review the previous studies, there is a study on preventive health behaviors for cancer of high school students[5] and middle-aged woman[6] only. In addition, many studies examine uterine cancer, thyroid cancer, breast cancer, and ovarian cancer separately. Comprehensive research on four major cancers of female is insufficient. Women's cancers with lower age of onset and higher incident rate can be prevented by practicing active preventive health behavior. Therefore, it deems necessary to grasp the female students' preventive behavior for women's cancer.

### **1.2. Purpose of this study**

The purpose of this study is to understand the actual condition of preventive behavior of women's cancer among female students.

## **2 Method**

### **2.1. Study Design**

This study is a descriptive research to investigate preventive behavior of women's cancer among female students.

### **2.2. Setting and Samples**

The convenient sample consisted of 93 female students from P university in B city. The researcher explained that female students who do not want to answer according to the purpose and procedures of this study can be withdrawn at any time and the collected data would be processed anonymously and the survey information will not be used for purposes other than for research. Then if agreed to participate voluntarily, they had female students write a written agreement and read and fill out a structured questionnaire.

### **2.3. Instrument**

#### **1) Preventive behavior of women's cancer**

Preventive behavior of women's cancer based on literature. And the tool is a 5-point scale with higher scores indicating higher level of preventive behavior of cancer. The reliability of the tool was Cronbach's  $\alpha = .75$  in this study.

#### **2.4. Data analyses**

The collected data was used with the PASW win 18.0 program.

### **3 Results**

#### **3.1. General Characteristics of Subjects**

Looking at the demographic characteristics, the ages of subjects were 19-32 years old and the mean age was 21.80 years old. In case of the level of economic conditions, 62 people were 'average' (66.7%) and the monthly pocket money of 67 people was 20 thousand won or higher (72.0%) which was the case for most. In case of grade, 57 people were sophomore (61.3%) and the major of 59 people was natural science (63.4%) and religion of 50 people was none which was the case for most. In case of health status, 87 people though above normal (93.6%) and 83 people answered 'interested in health' (89.2%). Only 10 people answered 'take regular exercise' and 4 people were smoking (4.3%) and 92 people were drinking (98.9%). For whether there was a family history of women's cancer, 12 people answered 'yes' (12.9%) and for whether there was a health care provider in family and relative, 21 people answered 'yes'. For whether they had information of cervical cancer vaccine, 70 people answered 'yes' (75.3%) and for whether they had information of women's cancer, 10 people answered 'yes'. In the case of information of uterine cancer, thyroid cancer, and ovarian cancer, most people answered 'from school education' and in the case of information of breast cancer, most people answered 'from mass media'. When I check whether female students took women's cancer screening for four major cancers, only 2.2% had screening for the uterine cancer, the breast cancer, the ovarian cancer each and 3.2% had screening for the thyroid cancer. The most reason for the women's cancer screening was learning about cancer from the media or the suggestion from a family member. A lot of students said the reason they did not get women's cancer screening done was because they did not have the women's cancer screening opportunity.

#### **3.2. Preventive Behavior of Women's Cancer**

The average score of preventive behavior of women's cancer was 63.07 points, that of uterine cancer was 28.71 points, that of thyroid cancer was 10.86 points, that of breast cancer was 24.10 points, and that of ovarian cancer was 12.67 point.

### 3.3. Preventive Behavior depend on General Characteristics

Preventive behavior of women's cancer significantly differed according to age ( $t=-2.32$ ,  $p=.022$ ), health concern ( $F=5.45$ ,  $p=.002$ ), regular exercise ( $t=3.30$ ,  $p=.001$ ), and information of women's cancer ( $t=2.49$ ,  $p=.014$ ).

## 4. Conclusion

This study is a descriptive research to investigate the actual condition of preventive behavior of women's cancer among female students. This research shows that the female students with interest on the health, doing regular exercise and have information women's cancers practice better preventive behaviors than those students who don't.

Therefore, it is necessary to help female students to have more interest in health and healthy habits to promote the preventive behaviors. And an educational strategy to help the female students to practice health behavior by themselves for women's cancer prevention is necessary. I also suggest a research to examine the influence knowledge and attitude about of women's cancer to the preventive behavior practice of female students.

## Refernce

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