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Knowledge and Practice of Undergraduate Nursing Students on Early Detection Measures of Breast Cancer

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Breast cancer is the most common malignancy which affecting women, and second cause of cancer death globally. Factors responsible for late stage presentation are the poor knowledge and poor awareness on Breast cancer of the public. The important resources of dissemination of breast cancer knowledge to women are the health professionals especially nurses who have high frequent contact with public. A study was conducted to assess knowledge and practice of undergraduate nursing students on early detection measures of Breast cancer. A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 269 Allied Health Sciences nursing students throughout the Sri Lankan universities. The data was collected by a self-administered questionnaire which consists of knowledge and practice assessing questions 10 and 19 respectively. Participant's mean age was 23.51 (SD= 1.7). There were (33.1%), (30.9%) and (36.1%) participants from 1st year, 2nd year and 3rd year respectively. The knowledge of breast cancer early detection measures were acceptable level (30.9% students in good and 61.7% in adequate knowledge). Among the female participants 40% practicing Self – Breast Examination on monthly, 19% practicing annually and 31% never performed. Also 53 participants had a Clinical Breast Examination and 23 participants undergone a mammography. Compare with the knowledge level, the practice of early detection measures among nursing students were comparatively poor. According to this study the undergraduate training and the institution's education plays a major role in the knowledge of breast cancer and practice on its early detection measures.

Keywords: Knowledge; Practice; Nursing students; Breast cancer; Early detection measures.