

Practices of Pap smear testing and associated sociodemographic factors among women attending the OPD at Divisional Hospital, Kondavil

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Background: Cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer worldwide and one third of cervical cancer burden is to be found in India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. It is the second largest cause of female cancer death in Sri Lanka. Human Papilloma virus is a major etiological agent of cervical cancer. Cervical cancer can be prevented by early detection and human papilloma virus vaccination. In Sri Lanka even though prevention services are available, most of the cancer cases are reported at a late stage.

Methodology: This was a descriptive cross sectional study to assess practices of Pap smear testing and associated socio demographic factors among 248 women between ages of 21 to 65 years attending the OPD at Divisional Hospital, Kondavil. Interviewer administered questionnaire was used and collected data was analysed by SPSS package.

Results: Majority of the participants were of age ≤ 35 years 169 (64.1%) and ever married women were 214(86.3%). All most all were Hindu 237(95.6%) and majority were housewife 180(72.6%). Among the total participants 178 (62.6%) had studied up to O/L. In this study among the ever married women only 15(7%) of the women had Pap smear test and none of them were aware about their results. All those who did Pap smear had it only once in their life time. Most of them 13(86.6%) screened at the age of 35 years in nearby Government Screening Program at Well women clinics. There were no significant correlations found between practices with the socio demographic factors such as educational level, duration of married, marital status and parity.

Conclusion: The Practice of Pap smear testing is poor among the population. It can be increased by providing health education and counselling on cervical cancer and Pap smear test.

Keywords: Pap smear, Jaffna, Women, socio-demographic