When Do Women with Breast Lumps Seek Medical Advice?

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الخلاصة

دراسة لـ 131 امرأة مصابة بعقد في ثديها وقد تبين من ألدراسة أنّ ألمدة بين الشعور بالعقدة ومراجعة الجهات الصحية للتحري وعلاج ألحالة قد تأخر بسبب خوفها من أن تكون العقدة ورما سرطانيا وخوفها أنّ الروح والحياة موجودتان في الثدي وبقلعها تقف الحياة كما ألجهل وألفاقة يلعب دور في تأخير تلقي ألعلاج.

Introduction

Worldwide, breast cancer comprises 22.9% of all cancers (excluding non-melanoma skin cancers) in women. In 2008, breast cancer caused 458,503 deaths worldwide (13.7% of cancer deaths in women). The first noticeable symptom of breast cancer is typically a lump that feels different from the rest of the breast tissue. More than 80% of breast cancer cases are discovered when the woman feels a lump. Indications of breast cancer other than a lump may include changes in breast size or shape, skin dimpling, nipple inversion, or spontaneous single-nipple discharge. Pain ("mastodynia") is an unreliable tool in determining the presence or absence of breast cancer, but may be indicative of other breast health issues. Most symptoms of breast disorders, including most lumps, do not turn out to represent underlying breast cancer. Benign breast diseases such as mastitis and fibroadenoma of the breast are more common causes of breast disorder symptoms. Nevertheless, the appearance of a new symptom should be taken seriously by both patients and their doctors, because of the possibility of an underlying breast cancer at almost any age.[1-5]

Patient and Methods

The study included 131 women with breast lumps consulted to our general surgery clinic between 2005 - 2009. The mean age of the patients was 34,7 ranging from 19 to 61).The presentation symptom was a lump in the breast with or without associated symptoms like pain, nipple discharge, nipple inversion, skin dimpling. All the palpable breast lumps were surgically removed (excisional or incisional biopsy) under general anethesia. The operation was done in the hospital or in the day clinic under sterile circumstances by the same surgeon. The main goal of the study was to evaluate the time between the first awareness of the lump and the request for medical help. Besides, the factors that contributes to delay of the search for medical advice.

Results

Among the 131 women, 90 patients (%68,7) applied to various clinics with

a suspicion of breast cancer. 41 patients delayed consultation between 1 week to 16 months. The causes of delay were as shown; fear (%65), ignorance (%15), poverty (%10), absence of discomfort (%10).

Fear to have a cancer is most likely the reason for the women to delay. The importance of breast as a pshycosexual organ and the gross belief in the community about the cancer to spread after surgical intervention are the reasons achieved.

Discussion

There are two main and simple ways to reduce mortality and mobidity from breast cancer. First of all early diagnosis and better treatment modalities. [6] %95 of breast lumps are found during self examination. The consequences of late diagnosis puts an an ignorable burden on both patient and their families. The main reason to delay fort he medical advice seems to be fear. So one of the most important approach must be the decrease the fear in people. Apprehension is the most crucial factor that we have to beat for beter outcomes in breast cancer. We must encourage women for frequent doctor visits and we must increase the awareness of breast cancer.

Conclusion

It is natural and understandable to be afraid of cancer. However the fear should not become a phobia and should not cause irrationality. Women should be encouraged to seek for medical help as soon as they discover abreast lump.

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