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Umera Baba
Research Scholar, Institute of
Home Science, University of
Kashmir, Srinagar, Jammu and
Kashmir, India

Nilofer Khan
Sr. Professor, Institute of Home
Science, University of Kashmir,
Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir,
India

Dr. Imtiaz Ali
Ex-Professor/Professor & Head
of the Department, Community
Medicine, SKIMS, Jammu and
Kashmir, India

An assessment of knowledge and level of awareness among postmenopausal women regarding management and control of osteoporosis

Umera Baba, Nilofer Khan and Dr. Imtiaz Ali

Abstract

The present study was undertaken to assess osteoporosis status among postmenopausal women of Kashmir. The total number of 380 postmenopausal women above 45 years from randomly selected four districts i.e. Srinagar, Ganderbal, Anantnag and Kupwara were covered. A scientifically self-designed oral questionnaire as per requirement was used for collecting data in the present study. The present study explored that the level of knowledge/awareness about disease among postmenopausal osteoporotic women is being influenced by some of these socio-medical factors. The awareness programmes could go a long way in creating and improving awareness levels about the health issue, providing advice, guidance and counselling on nutrition related issues as well as supporting women on mental and emotional levels for better wellbeing and quality of life.

Keywords: Postmenopausal, osteoporosis, socio-medical factors, quality of life

1. Introduction

Osteoporosis in women over the age of 50yrs undoubtedly is related to hormonal influence of estrogen on bone health with the onset of menopause. The progressive changes in bone structure lead to fractures and increase in morbidity and mortality among menopausal women (Christenson, ES2012) [2]. While medical management through drugs remains high on agenda with goal of treatment being to reduce the risk of future fracture, there is a need to create understanding and commitment from the vulnerable population in order to prevent and manage the condition (Keen R, 2007) [5]. In addition to the pharmacological treatment for postmenopausal osteoporosis non-pharmacological interventions need to be adapted which include adequate calcium intake and diet, selected exercise programs, reduction of other risk factors for osteoporotic fractures, and reduction of the risk of falls in elderly individuals. Several studies addressing the awareness, perception, and knowledge about osteoporosis in different countries and various populations have been published already (Gemalmaz, A., & Oge, A. 2008) [3]. According to the National Osteoporosis Foundation, increasing awareness is the key to prevention and early detection of osteoporosis. Unfortunately, many individuals are either unaware of their risk of developing osteoporosis, uninformed of preventive behaviors or have failed to engage in preventive behaviors as they view osteoporosis as a distant threat (Riaz M, *et al.* 2008) [7]. It is important to raise the awareness and knowledge of osteoporosis and its prevention measures as osteoporosis is a preventable disease. Health care providers need to determine the population's knowledge and attitudes towards osteoporosis to plan effective education programs. One of the first steps for raising awareness and planning education is to examine how much is known about the disease by those who have the disease and by the lay public. Therefore; the aim of this study is to assess the awareness and knowledge of osteoporosis in a sample of Kashmiri postmenopausal women.

Methodology

The present study was carried out in four districts of Kashmir division i.e. Srinagar, Ganderbal, Anantnag and Kupwara selected randomly for the purpose. A total number of 380 postmenopausal women above the age of 45 years from the above mentioned districts of Kashmir were covered. Out of the total sample,

Correspondence

Umera Baba
Research Scholar, Institute of
Home Science, University of
Kashmir, Srinagar, Jammu and
Kashmir, India

Postmenopausal osteoporosis was labelled in women only when such women had confirmed osteoporosis (by symptomatology, X-Ray finding, BMD or from biochemical investigations) as per the relevant medical record. An oral questionnaire scientifically designed after a thorough and detailed study of the problem and related review of literature has been used for collecting data in the present study. The analysis was performed by scoring of responses. The data thus collected was tabled, analysed and interpreted as per the needs of the study.

Results

Knowledge regarding Postmenopausal osteoporosis

Lack of knowledge and awareness about PM osteoporosis remains an important area in early management and prevention of a disease. The present study depicts that

postmenopausal osteoporosis was more commonly observed among women with poor knowledge on various aspects of osteoporosis 137(52.7%) as compared to women with better knowledge in same group i.e. 123(47.3%). Hence, it can be inferred that the lower level of knowledge on various aspects of osteoporosis in postmenopausal period can be an important factor determining PM osteoporosis, its complications as well as its prevention. Women with inadequate information about osteoporosis possess limited knowledge about the disease, do not taking adequate measures to prevent or treat osteoporosis as they age (Ribeiro V, Blakeley J and LaryeaM,2000) [6]. The susceptible population actually lacks adequate knowledge about osteoporosis, and there is a strong need to educate them regarding the factors that predispose to osteoporosis (Gopinathan.NR, *et Al.* 2016) [4].

Table 1: Distribution of respondents as per knowledge/awareness

Variables	Osteoporotic group Number	%age	Non-osteoporotic group Number.	%age
Poor knowledge (women < mean score)	137	52.7%	49	40.8%
Better knowledge (women > mean score)	123	47.3%	71	59.2%

Habitat and awareness regarding Postmenopausal Osteoporosis

Health information is an important resource for patients to understand and engage in the management of their health conditions. The present study reveals that while almost equal number of women from urban areas and rural areas had poor knowledge regarding various aspects of Postmenopausal Osteoporosis (50.4 % and 49.6%). Almost similar pattern was observed among women who possessed better knowledge regarding PMO. Hence, there is no impact of habitat on knowledge regarding postmenopausal osteoporosis. Our findings are similar to the findings of Arcury, T. A., & Christianson, E. H. (1993) [1] who also didn't find any significant differences by residence in these characteristics.

Type of menopause and awareness regarding Postmenopausal Osteoporosis

The present study shows that women entering natural menopause are better knowledgeable about various aspects of Postmenopausal osteoporosis than women getting menopause due to surgical intervention. It has been observed that more women i.e. 90.2 % with better knowledge (obtaining more than mean score) belonged to group with natural menopause compared to just 76.6% women with poor knowledge in the same group. Similarly only lesser number of women i.e. 9.7% women with better knowledge belonged to surgical menopause group compared to 23.3 % women with poor knowledge among same group.

Table 2: Relation between knowledge regarding postmenopausal osteoporosis and habitat of Postmenopausal Osteoporotic women

Variables	Rural	Urban
Poor knowledge (< mean score)	68(49.6%)	69(50.4%)
Better knowledge (> mean score)	59(47.9%)	64(52.1%)

Table 4: Relation between knowledge regarding postmenopausal osteoporosis and type of menopause

Variables	Surgical menopause	Natural menopause
Poor knowledge (< mean score)	32(23.3%)	105(76.6%)
Better knowledge (> mean score)	12(9.7%)	111(90.2%)

Age at menopause and awareness regarding Postmenopausal Osteoporosis

Menopause marks the beginning of a stage of life characterized by an increased susceptibility to diseases such as coronary heart disease and osteoporosis. The present study shows that women entering in menopause at an early age are definitely better knowledgeable about various aspects of Postmenopausal osteoporosis than ones entering at late age. As can be seen that 56.9 % women with better knowledge (obtaining more than mean score) belonged to early 40's compared to just 41.6% women in early 40's with poor knowledge. Menopause is an unavoidable change that every women will experience, assuming she reaches middle age and beyond. It is helpful if women are able to learn what to expect and what options are available to assist the transition (Satpathy. M, 2016) [8].

Conclusion

Based on our present study findings from postmenopausal osteoporotic women of Kashmir division and subsequent analysis it can be inferred that the awareness level regarding osteoporosis among postmenopausal women was influenced (having better knowledge) mainly by factors like age at menopause and women having entered natural menopause other factors like their habitat didn't influence awareness level much.

Table 3: Relation between knowledge regarding postmenopausal osteoporosis and age at menopause

Variables	Early 40's	Late 40's	Early 50's
Poor knowledge (< mean score)	57(41.6%)	54(39.4%)	26(18.9%)
Better knowledge (> mean score)	70(56.9%)	31(25.2%)	22(17.8%)

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