ORIGINAL ARTICLE

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Determining the epidemiologic characteristics of patients suffering from breast cancer related Lymphedema referring to Martyr Motahari Lymphedema Clinic (1388-1391)

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Abstract

Background: Breast cancer is the second cause of cancer death in women in the world. Lymphedema is also a chronic and debilitating condition for breast cancer survivors. The main aim of this study was to determine the epidemiologic characteristics of patients suffering from Breast Cancer Related Lymphedema (BCRL).

Method: 149 patients with lymphedema after breast cancer who were referred to Shiraz Lymphedema Clinic in Martyr Motahari Clinic were chosen. Patients 'files was studied. Patients' characteristics such as age, BMI, education, marital status, and physical activity, history of lymphangitis attack, comorbid conditions and procedures for breast cancer treatment (history of radiotherapy, chemotherapy, hormone therapy and number of lymph nodes resected) were extracted from patients 'files in clinic and divided into groups. Abundance and percentage of patients in each group were calculated and shown in graphs.

Results: 78.5 percent of patients were older than 45 year.53 percent of patients had less than 12-year education.59 percent of patients had BMI >30.77.2 percent of patients had moderate physical activity level and 4.7 percent of them had high activity level. Modified radical mastectomy was done in71.1 percent of patients. 94 ,83.2 and 71.1 percent of patients in order had history of chemotherapy, radiotherapy and hormone therapy.10 and more than 10 lymph nodes were resected in 70.5 percent of patients.14.8 percent of patients had hypertension and lymphangitis attack was occurred in 36.9 percent of patients.

Conclusion: Obesity is known as a risk factor for BCRL. In our study 53 percent of patients were overweight (BMI > 30).Only 12.8 percent of patients had more than 12- year education. Giving information about a healthy diet and also different aspects of lymphedema to these two groups of patients is necessary. Treatment procedures for breast cancer such as chemotherapy, radiotherapy, hormone therapy and lymph node excision are also known as BCRL risk factos. The majority of patients had these treatment procedures in our study. This study only gave basic information about abundance of characteristics of patients and these data can be used in future studies. Further characteristics in more patients should be evaluated.

Keywords: Breast Cancer, Lymphedema, Abundancy.

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