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Knowledge and practices towards HRT among hysterectomized patients attending to Gynae-oncology unit, Maharagama

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Key words

hormone replacement therapy, gynaecological malignancies, hysterectomy

Objectives

Iatrogenic menopause by means of surgery or chemoradiation is common among patients attending gynae-oncological units. The risk of cancer-related death often overweighs the complications due to loss of oestrogen and progesterone. The safety of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) in gynaecological malignancies is not fully understood due to the limited evidence, however, HRT is proven safe in certain instances. A significant proportion of young or middle-aged patients who reach iatrogenic menopause is observed to be not on HRT. This preliminary study was carried out to assess the knowledge and practices towards HRT among hysterectomized patients.

Method

A self-administered questionnaire covering the knowledge and practices of HRT usage and menopausal symptoms was provided to randomly

selected 51 patients who underwent hysterectomy at gynae-onco surgical unit.

Results

Participants were ranging from 35 years to 62 years while the commonest responders (n=18, 35.2%) were categorized in between 51 to 55 years. The majority (52.9%) were menopausal at the time of hysterectomy. 41 (80.3%) had school education at least up to the ordinary level. Only 8 (15.6%) had a family history of gynaecological malignancies. Histology has confirmed malignancy in 37 patients. Majority of the patients (n=47, 92%) had undergone oophorectomy. None of the patients were current users of HRT. Beneficial effects of HRT were not known to 89% of patients. 15 patients were aware that lifestyle changes alleviate menopausal symptoms. Only eight patients (15.6%) were willing for HRT use.

Conclusions

Although the sample size is small, these findings revealed the usage and knowledge with regard to HRT is significantly low in hysterectomized patients. Measures to improve their knowledge on menopause and HRT will be important to increase the usage of HRT in this high-risk group which in turn will improve the health and quality of life.