

A STUDY ON HEALTH AND FITNESS AMONG WOMEN OUTPATIENTS IN KONGUNADU HOSPITAL, COIMBATORE

Dr. R. Baskar*, N. Pavithra**

*Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore

**MSW Student, Department of Social Work, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history of mankind health and physical fitness has been considered an essential element of everyday life. Healthy human development is a necessary foundation for all development progress. Good health is fundamental to the ability of individuals to realize their full human potential. The expert committee of the World Health Organization (1981) described physical fitness as “the ability to undertake muscular work satisfactorily.” Physical fitness is the capacity to early out, reasonably well, various forms of physical activities, without being unduly tired and includes qualities important to the individual’s health and well-being.

The fundamental right to health articulated by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1946 remains integral to development today. This right is strongly reflected in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the guiding international development framework adopted by the United Nations (UN) in 2000, and the Human Development Index used to measure the progress of all nations against universal human development goals.

Many countries are working to improve their health-care services, but better health services alone will not improve health outcomes. The health of individuals and populations is determined to a significant degree by social factors such as poverty, income inequality, education, employment, housing, gender and social connectedness. These social determinants of health produce widespread inequities in health within and between societies. The poor and the disadvantaged experience worse health than the rich and powerful, have less access to services.

According to the WHO, experience and scientific evidence show that regular participation in appropriate physical activity and sport provides people of both sexes and all ages and conditions, including persons with disabilities, with a wide range of physical, social and mental health benefits. Physical activity and sport support strategies to improve diet and discourage the use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs. As well, physical activity and sport help reduce violence, enhance functional capacity, and promote social interaction and integration. Because developing countries

have relatively limited resources to devote to health care for people with chronic disease, prevention is the most cost-effective and sustainable way to address this health challenge.

Physical inactivity is the most common of all health risk factors across countries. After tobacco use, inactivity is the greatest contributor to mortality and morbidity from all causes. Physical activity is, therefore, increasingly viewed as the least expensive and most effective preventive “medicine” for combating the increasing worldwide problem of obesity and, with physical fitness, may represent the most effective strategy to prevent chronic disease. The benefits of physical activity in relation to non-communicable disease are irrefutable. These include the primary and secondary prevention of chronic diseases, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, hypertension, obesity, depression and osteoporosis, as well as individual and societal economic benefits such as reduce.

With respect to health, women have a greater life expectancy than men, but are also more likely to experience illness, violence and poverty. Over a lifetime, they suffer more ill health and are more frequent users of the health care system. As well, they often carry a double workload, one in the paid work force and one in the home. Women have a distinctive relationship with “health” in our society partly because of their reproductive capacities, but also because of their multiple roles. Women provide most unpaid and informal health care. In many ways, the main health worries and problems reported by women reflect the social realities of their lives, especially with respect to psychosocial health. However, when asked about their most bothersome health problems, women identify stress, arthritis, being overweight, migraines/ chronic headaches and tiredness in descending order. Women also identify the primary social problems as violence, discrimination in the labour force (including pay inequity), single motherhood problems, financial problems, day care and the pressures of multiple roles.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Penedo, Frank J; Dahn, Jason R (2005) conducted a study on “Exercise and Well Being: A Review of Mental and Physical Health benefits associated with Physical Activity”, highlights the recent work evaluating the relationship between exercise, physical activity and physical and mental health. Both cross – sectional and longitudinal studies, as well as randomized clinical trials, are included. The studies include diverse ethnic populations, including men and women, as well as several age groups (e.g. adolescents, middle – aged and older adults). Results of the studies continue to support a growing literature suggesting that exercise, physical interventions have beneficial effects across several physical and mental – health outcomes. Most work suggests that exercise and physical activity are associated with better quality of life and health outcomes.

CMAJ (2006) conducted a study on “ Health Benefits of Physical Activity: the evidence”, the primary purpose of this narrative study was to evaluate the current literature and to provide further insight into the role physical inactivity plays in the development of chronic disease and premature death. They also reveal that the current Health Canada physical activity guidelines are sufficient to elicit health benefits, especially in previously sedentary people. The prevalence of physical activity (among 51% of adult Canadians) is higher than that of all other modifiable risk factors. In this study they review the current evidence relating to physical activity in the primary relating to physical activity in the primary and secondary prevention of premature death from any cause, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, some cancers and osteoporosis. The evidence relating to physical fitness and musculoskeletal fitness and briefly describe the independent effects of frequency and intensity of physical activity. There appears to be a graded linear relation between the volume of physical activity and health status, such that the most of the physically active people are at the lowest risk. However, the greatest improvements in health status are seen when people who are least fit become physically active.

AIM

The study aims to know about the level of awareness about health and fitness among women patients at out-patient ward in Kongunad Hospital, Coimbatore.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To know the socio-demographic details
- To assess the knowledge on health and fitness
- To know about the level of knowledge in relation to general health
- To assess the knowledge on nutritional intake
- To know the awareness level on gynecological health

AREA OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted in Kongunad Hospital Private Limited., under the guidance of Dr. Ramila Rajagopal, and Dr. K. Selvarajan. Kongunad Hospital is a 250 bedded multispecialty hospital, run by one of the eminent doctor in town Dr. P. Raju and the hospital has all specialties of medicine and surgery with state of the art lab and medical imaging facilities, 24 hours ambulance service, emergency medical trauma care facilities with separate medical and cardiac intensive care units. This hospital is one of the important multispecialty hospital in Coimbatore city. Many people are visiting the outpatient ward daily hence, the hospital has been selected for the study.

RESEARCH DESIGN

A descriptive study involves formulation the objectives of the study, defining the population and selecting a sample, designing the methods of data collection, and analysis of the data and results. Descriptive research aims i) to portray accurately the characteristics if a particular individual situation, or group and ii) to determine the frequency with which something occurs or when it is associated with something else. Hence the researcher adopted Descriptive research design for this study.

UNIVERSE OF THE STUDY

Each and every women outpatients who comes for treatment to Kongunad Hospital comprises the universe of the study.

SAMPLING METHOD

Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling method which involves the sample being drawn from that part of the population which is close to hand. That is, a sample population selected because it is readily available and convenient. Since it is a floating population researcher opted this sampling method. The women outpatients visiting Kongunadu hospital were the samples of the study. Totally 60 respondents were conveniently selected for the present study.

INCLUSION CRITERIA

The women outpatients of Kongunadu Hospital who visited the gynecology ward have been selected for the study. Other female outpatients were excluded from the study.

TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION

Interview schedule was used for data collection. The interview schedule contains 39 questions. It includes the respondents' general socio-demographic details, level of awareness about general health, and gynecological health and fitness.

PERIOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The constructed tool was used for data collection. The data was collected in the period of January 2015.

FINDINGS

General awareness on health

- 71.7% of the respondents read books on health and fitness.
- 63.3% of the respondents were not aware about the importance of health and fitness.
- 71.7% of the respondents were not aware about BMI (Body Mass Index).

- Majority (81.7%) of the respondents agree that yearly health checkup is necessary for women.
- 65% of the respondents agreed that immunization is important for all ages.
- Majority (86.7%) of the respondents agreed that periodical medical examinations detects illness at the earlier stage.
- 53.3% of the respondents were aware about the normal water intake per day.
- Majority (83.3%) of the respondents were not aware about calorie of food intake per day.
- Majority (81.7%) of the respondents were not aware of the nutrients present in the food that they eat daily.
- Majority (91.7%) of the respondents agreed that drinking tea/coffee is not good for the health.
- Majority (85%) of the respondents were not aware of the preventive measures of cancers.
- 53.3% of the respondents were not aware about the benefits of Master Health Checkup.

Awareness on gynecological health

- Majority (88.3%) of the respondents do not know that breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer in the age group of 40-55 years.
- Majority (91.7%) of the respondents do not know about prevention of breast cancer.
- Majority (95%) of the respondents do not know about prevention of cervical cancer.
- Majority (96.7%) of the respondents agree that pregnant women should undergo periodic medical checkup.
- Majority (91.7%) of the respondents were aware of the diet to be followed during pregnancy.
- Majority (93.3%) of the respondents were aware of the do's and don'ts during pregnancy.
- Majority (95%) of the respondents agreed that mother's milk is the ideal food for the babies till 6 months.
- Majority (81.7%) of the respondents were not aware of the nipple and breast care in feeding.
- Majority (86.7%) of the respondents were not aware about menopause and its problems.
- 76.7% of the respondents are aware of the drugs to be avoided during pregnancy and breast feeding.
- 65% of the respondents were not aware about premenstrual syndrome or problems related to menses.
- 56.7% of the respondents were not aware of the immunizations that is to be done during pregnancy.
- Majority (86.7%) of the respondents do not know the ways to prevent heart disease.

- Majority (83.3%) of the respondents do not know the ways to prevent diabetes.
- Majority (83.3%) of the respondents were not aware about healthy and unhealthy vaginal discharge.

Awareness on physical fitness

- 78.4% of the respondents agreed that by modifying the diet and exercising they could maintain ideal weight.
- Majority (96.7%) of the respondents agreed that exercising is good for health.
- Majority (80%) of the respondents agreed that yoga is good for physical and mental wellbeing.
- Majority (95%) of the respondents agreed that walking improves fitness.
- Majority (83.3%) of the respondents stated that fitness center like gyms do not help in improving the strength and stamina of women.
- 60% of the respondents stated that they do not educate their friends regarding staying fit to lead a healthy life.

SUGGESTIONS

- Majority (more than 70%) of the respondents were not aware about health and fitness including BMI, ideal diet, exercising, calorie of food intake, water intake per day, immunization, cancer, goodness of mother's milk, vaginal discharge, master health checkup, yoga, walking etc. hence they should be given awareness.
- The women must be given awareness regarding their health problems and when to consult doctor when to undergo checkups.
- Educate them, about prevention of major diseases and diet to be followed, immunizations corresponding to the age and disease must be made known to them.
- The basic self-examinations to identify the illness at the earlier stages i.e., signs and symptoms of the disease should be made known to them.
- Knowledge about puberty, pre-menstrual syndrome, breast self-examinations should be taught to them in the educational institutions which will help to detect illness at the early stage.
- Women's should be aware of the periodical medical checkups which make them to be fit and free from the common infections.
- Medical camps should be organized at all places to check the general medical fitness and particular infections.

- Booklets or pamphlets containing the basic information about the health i.e., water intake, BMI, height corresponding to weight should be distribution to the general public to make them fit and healthy.
- Further booklets on women's health problems relating to women health issues and common infections should be made known to them so that they will be careful about their infections and its prevention.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded from the above study that majority of the respondents were not aware of their health and fitness and also about the general health problems its effect and also about the preventive measure of the disease etc., moreover the women were not aware of their health issues and also its effect on health and also doesn't know the importance to be fit. So proper awareness should be given to the women in order to safe guard themselves from various diseases. Moreover as defined by WHO "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely absence of disease of infirmity". So health is considered to be very precious in human life.

Healthy human development is a necessary foundation for all development progress. Good health is fundamental to the ability of individuals to realize their full human potential. It is also a crucially important economic asset. On a national scale, poor health diminishes productivity and impedes economic growth, while investment in better health outcomes is generally seen as investment in economic growth. So healthy individuals make healthy nation. Women are the greatest power of the nation and they are the creator of lives so health is considered to be the wealth. Women's must be kept aware of all the illness and prevention of the illness only when there is proper awareness on the health issues and its prevention achievement of health is possible.

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