

Pregnant Women's Knowledge about Smoking, Breastfeeding and Breast Cancer

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Introduction

- Breastfeeding has been shown to be a protective factor against breast cancer. Lebanon has some of the lowest rates in the Middle East. While 96% of women initiate breastfeeding at birth, by 1 year only 27% are still being breastfed.
- Also, it has been shown that there is a relationship between breastfeeding and breast cancer especially for women who begin smoking before their first child. 31% of Lebanese women smoke and of those 25% smoke during pregnancy.
- Therefore this research aimed to answer two questions:
 - Do pregnant women who receive care at AUBMC know about the relationship between breastfeeding and breast cancer?
 - Do those same women know about the relationship between smoking and breast cancer?



Methods

- A 10 question survey was developed which aimed to ascertain pregnant women's knowledge about breastfeeding protective factors and risks to a woman's health from smoking cigarettes.
- 196 participants were solicited from the obstetrical clinics at the American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC).



Results

Demographics

- 80% were 25 to 35 years old
- 73% had at least a bachelor's degree; 29% had at least masters degree
- 49% were in their first pregnancy; 31% were in their second pregnancy

Breastfeeding

- 45% previously breastfed for 1-6 months; 20% for 6-12 months; 16% for 12-18 months
- 59% received NO breastfeeding education
- 89% said that breastfeeding helps the mother to bond with her baby
- 13% said that breastfeeding protects against breast cancer
- 28% said that breastfeeding delays a woman's menses
- 72% said that breastfeeding does not help with child spacing

Smoking

- 17% were smokers; 83% do not smoke
- 27% were trying to quit
- 37% planned to stop smoking
- 93% said smoking is a risk for heart disease
- 19% said smoking is a risk for bone fracture
- 53% said smoking is a risk for breast cancer while 47% said it is not
- 50% said smoking is a risk for infertility

Conclusion

Of those surveyed it is apparent that:

- Most are well educated
- Although more than half received NO education about breastfeeding, still these women were knowledgeable about some benefits of breastfeeding
- Most who had had a pregnancy breastfed; 36% breastfed longer than 6 months
- Few knew that breastfeeding protects against breast cancer
- The majority did not smoke
- Most knew smoking is a risk for heart disease and infertility
- However, the majority did not know that smoking increases risk for bone fracture
- Most women knew that smoking increases the risk for breast cancer

