

To determine knowledge of post-menopausal women regarding menopause

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Abstract:

Objective: To assess knowledge in post-menopausal women regarding menopausal symptoms.

Material and Methods: This is cross sectional study conducted at department of Gyne Obs Sobrhaj Maternity Hospital Karachi from (November 06, 2014 to May 05, 2015) women attending Obstetrics and Gynecology department were interviewed for menopausal knowledge. For every correct response one mark was given and those scored 70% or more was considered as knowledgeable.

Results: Mean duration of menopause was 3.17 ± 1.21 years. Less than equal to matric educational status was found in majority of the patients (50.20%). Economical status of majority of the patients (45.60%) was poor. Adequate level of knowledge was found in 35.50% patients.

Conclusion: In our study more than 25% of post-menopausal women had adequate knowledge regarding menopause

Keywords: menopause, post-menopausal women, knowledge level, estrogen and progesterone

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Introduction:

Menopause is defined its the time in life of women when her menstrual cycle stopped more than 12 months duration, and due to decreased secretion of both hormones estrogen and progesterone. Natural menopause can be diagnosed, more than 12 months amenorrhea not due to any pathological reason. Menopause can be caused by radiotherapy, chemotherapy and surgery. Usual post-menopausal symptoms are urinary incontinence, dryness, sleep disturbances, mood changes, sexual dysfunction, cognitive changes, somatic complaints, and reduced quality of life which could be due to secondary symptoms like cardiovascular diseases, osteoporosis, and strokes, etc or related to other causes.¹

It is important that women during menopausal period have adequate knowledge and positive attitude regarding menopausal transition that may enable them to accept invite changes and

loses and recognize qualities and capabilities.² Globally median age of menopause ranges from 45-55 years.³

Multiple factors may influence women's knowledge regarding menopausal status, educational, social background, physical, emotional health and believes about menopause. Two local studies conducted on women older than 40 years of age showed that majority of illiterate women also knew about menopause. The study conducted at Isra University, Sindh Pakistan, shows that 78.78% women having knowledge about menopause, while 73.52% were un-educated and 26.47% were educated.⁴

Several factors have been found affecting women's knowledge and perception e.g. education, age, parity, employment, socio-economic condition etc.⁷ Menopausal women knowledge widely studied in western societies, but less info is available in non-western people. So significant

Table-1: Comparison of knowledge with age (n=217)

Age (in years)	Knowledge		Total	p-value
	Inadequate	Adequate		
≤50	47 (33.6)	20 (26)	67 (30.9)	0.246
>50	93 (66.4)	57 (74)	150 (69.1)	
Total	140 (100)	77 (100)	217 (100)	

Table-2: Comparison of knowledge with duration of menopause (n=217)

Duration of menopause (in years)	Knowledge		Total	p-value
	Inadequate	Adequate		
≤3	111 (79.3)	37 (48.1)	37 (48.1)	0.001
>3	29 (20.7)	40 (51.9)	69 (31.8)	
Total	140 (100)	77 (100)	217 (100)	

Table-3: Comparison of knowledge with parity (n=217)

Parity	Knowledge		Total	p-value
	Inadequate	Adequate		
Primipara	50 (35.7)	16 (20.8)	66 (30.4)	0.011
Multipara	21 (15)	23 (29.9)	44 (20.3)	
Grand Multipara	69 (49.3)	38 (49.4)	107 (49.3)	
Total	140 (100)	77 (100)	217 (100)	

Table-4: Comparison of knowledge with marital status (n=217)

Marital status	Knowledge		Total	p-value
	Inadequate	Adequate		
Married	128 (91.4)	74 (96.1)	202 (93.1)	0.194
Unmarried	12 (8.6)	3 (3.9)	15 (6.9)	
Total	140 (100)	77 (100)	217 (100)	

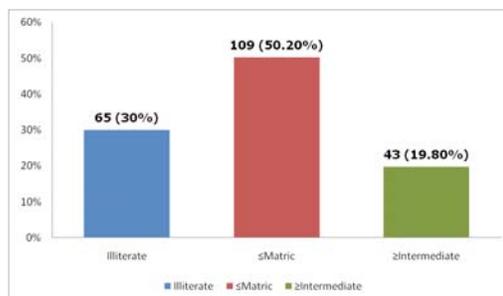


Figure-1: Educational Status postmenopausal women

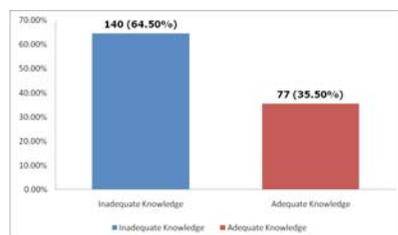


Figure-2: Knowledge of postmenopausal women

Material and Methods:

Our this study was cross sectional conducted at department of Gynaecology and Obstetrics Sobrhaj Maternity Hospital Karachi (November 06, 2014 to May 05, 2015) women attending obstetrics and gynecology department were interviewed for menopausal knowledge. For every correct response one mark was given and those scored 70% or more was considered as knowledgeable. All post-menopausal women of duration greater than one year and age 45-70 years are included in this study. Women with symptoms of medical disease and having history of psychiatric disorder were excluded from study.

All women of age 45-70 yrs visiting obstetrics and gynecology department were interviewed with Informed consent. The pre-designed questionnaire was used to access the knowledge of post-1menopausal women. The interview was conducted by researches herself in a conducive environment. For every correct response one mark was given and the percentage was calculated, and those score 70% or more was considered as knowledgeable. This information along with demographics like age, parity, marital status, duration of menopause, educational level, economical status and knowledge regarding menopause was noted in proforma.

Results: Average age of women was 54.47 ±5.86 yrs. (table-1) Majority of the patients (69.10%) were presented with >50 years of age. (Figure-4) Mean duration of menopause was 3.17 ±1.21 years. (table 2) Most of the patients (49.30%) were grand multiparous. (figure-5) Majority of the patients 202 (93.10%) were married.(figure-6) Less than equal to matric educational status was found in majority of the patients (50.20%). (figure-7) Economical status of majority of the patients (45.60%) was poor. (figure-8) Adequate level of knowledge was found in 35.50% patients. (figure-9) Stratification was done to see the effect of age, duration of menopause, marital status, parity, educational status and economical status on the outcome. Results are shown in table 3-8.

differences in knowledge of symptoms seen in Asian vs western women.⁸

Discussion:

It is important that women during menopausal period have adequate knowledge and positive attitude regarding menopausal transition that may enable them to accept menopausal changes and change of the life style.² Globally mean age of menopause was 45-55 years.³

Factors influencing women's knowledge of menopausal status are, social background, educational, physical and emotional health and belief about menopause. Two local studies conducted on women older than 40 years of age showed that majority of illiterate women also knew about menopause.

The study conducted at Isra University, Sindh Pakistan, shows that 78.79% women were knowledgeable, amid them 73.52% were illiterate and 26.47% were educated.⁴ One study consisting 100 women done at JPMC Karachi elicited that 93% amid 79 were illiterate and 57% amid 21 were aware for post-menopausal symptoms and its effects. Another descriptive cross sectional consisting 70 women done at Maternal and child Health Centre (MCH center) Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) Islamabad have shown same results that 74.4% responders have knowledge and knew about menopausal symptoms, 55.8% were completely aware of symptoms while only 9-10% knew about implications of menopause.⁵

The outcome indicated the mean knowledge of women regarding symptoms, complications and ways to control them, which are compatible with results of study done in Iran. While studies of Tehran shows that women's knowledge for menopause was poor. Studies results in other developing countries are compatible with the result of this study to some extent and these mostly indicate improper knowledge of menopause in women. Good difference of knowledge in women was noted in studies of developed countries, in America, the knowledge level was (80%) for menopause. In Italy showed that half of the samples were lacking in information about menopause.⁶

In our study, adequate level of knowledge was found in 35.50% patients. Several factors have been found influencing women's knowledge and perception towards menopause e.g. age, parity, education, socio-economic condition, employment etc.⁷ Significant knowledge difference was noted in western and non-western population.⁸

Women's mental aspect towards menopause and knowledge regarding benefits and risks of Hormone replacement therapy directly affect their use of HT.⁹ However clinicians also have a strong influence on women's mental aspect towards hormone replacement therapy.⁹⁻¹¹

However, commercial interests have significant role in promoting a biomedical view of menopause and in medicalizing it.¹² A KAP survey conducted on menopause and HT by the Istituto Superiore di Sanita, the Italian National Institute of Health, in collaboration with the Consensus Conference Promoting Committee.¹³

In our survey outcome women reported, as those in North Europe,^{14,15} that media plays an important role in information including menopause, next are friends and health professionals, paramedics, nurses and doctors. Women's thoughts regarding menopause and knowledge on hormone replacement therapy advantages and disadvantages have proved to affect their propensity to use Hormone therapy.⁹

Media and Physicians are two most important sources of information about Hormone therapy not only in our survey as well as in many more studies.^{10,11,15}

Many authors explained that discussion with doctors about menopause and HT has a positive effect in increasing knowledge of women for use of Hormone therapy.^{9-11,16}

It could be because women who suffer by the most severe symptoms and visit to doctor therefore need HT. 16% of the women of our survey took HT, 27% of the women was those who were peri-menopausal and 35% were suffering from menopausal symptoms.

Many studies based on symptomatology have been criticised due to methodological grounds, such as relying on selected women who visit clinics or usage unquantifiable means of symptoms.¹⁷ Large scale studies on Nigerian women drawn taken the general population are not available.¹⁸ Menopause and the post-menopausal period are very significant landmarks in woman's life as she spend more than a third of her life during these periods without significant production of endogenous oestrogen.^{19,20}

Menopause is the permanent stoppage of menstruation due to loss of ovarian follicular activity.⁷ This is diagnosed only retrospectively after 12 months of amenorrhoea not due to any pathologic or physiological cause.^{19,21} The median age of 50 years remained mostly constant throughout the centuries, unaffected by reduction of disease and improving nutrition.^{19,22} However, certain chemotherapeutic agents, smoking, radiation, and even hysterectomy, may contribute to an earlier onset of menopause called as premature menopause.¹⁹

The majority of women reach to menopause and spend one-third of their lives in post-menopausal state.²⁰ The long term metabolic issues of menopause are therefore increasing day by day. Oestrogen deficiency is the main culprit of consequences of menopause and is responsible for the short and long-term symptoms.¹⁹ As a result of diminished ovarian oestrogen activity and, ultimately, menstrual cycles are anovulatory, with prolonged, erratic inter-menstrual intervals.

Conclusion:

In our study more than 25% of post-menopausal women had adequate knowledge regarding menstrual cycle and menopause.

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Role and contribution of authors:

Dr Samreen Kazmi, done data collection and did initial writeup.

Dr Asifa Khuwaja, data collection and critical review of the article

Dr Rekha, data analysis went through the article and did the final changes

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