

THE ROLE OF CERVICAL SCREENING IN EARLY DETECTION OF CERVICAL LESIONS

Maysaloun M. Al-Ani¹ MBChB, FICMC(Com. Med.), Abdul-Hussain Al-Hadi¹, MBChB, PhD, Faiza A. Al-Rawi² MBChB, FICMC (Pathology)

Abstract

Background: Papanicolaou (pap) smear is the most effective cancer prevention screening tool ever devised.

Objective: To study the prevalence of cervical inflammatory, premalignant and malignant lesions and to identify factors related to the prevalence of those lesions.

Methods: A cross sectional study was conducted over 3 months period on 302 women attending a Gynecology and Obstetrics outpatient clinic. A detailed history was recruited and pap smear was performed after taking patient consent.

Results: Among the total of 300 satisfactory pap smears, pathological changes were found in 209 (69.7%) while the rest 91 (30.3%) did not show any abnormality. More than one type of pathology were found in some cervical smears. The prevalence of different pathological changes revealed by cytological

diagnosis of 302 pap smear were: Non-specific cervicitis 188(62.7%), Squamous metaplasia 23 (7.7%), Moniliasis 11 (3.7%), Squamous dysplasia (mild and moderate) 7 (2.3%), trichomouns vaginalis 4(1.3%), HPV infection 4(1.3%), IUCD changes 4(1.3%) and 2 smears (0.7%) were unsatisfactory and excluded from the study.

Conclusions: The prevalence of pre-cancerous and cancerous cervical lesions are low and comparable to other studies. Low educational level and improper genital and sexual hygienic practices are associated with inflammatory smears, and they are common findings among women with pre-cancerous lesions. History of prior genital infection, using contraception, abortion and curettage are associated with cervicitis.

Keywords: pap smear, cervical cancer, cervicitis

IRAQI J MED SCI, 2005; VOL. 4 (2): 141-147

Introduction

Cervical cancer is the second or third most common neoplastic disease affecting women^[1]. In Iraq cervical cancer ranks the tenth within the leading cancers for females^[2]. The Pap test is a screening tool that identifies women likely to have pre-malignant disease and high risk for cervical cancer^[3].

Cervical Intraepithelial neoplasia (CIN) and cervical cancer remain important health problems for women worldwide, with high morbidity and mortality^[4,5]. Risk factors

for cervical cancer are: multiple sexual partners, male partners with multiple sexual partners, early age of first intercourse, male sex partner who has had a partner with cervical cancer, current or prior HPV infection or condyloma, history of herpes simplex infection, HIV infection, history of STD, immuno-suppression (*e.g.* renal transplant), smokers of abusers of other substances including alcohol, history of lower genital tract dysplasia or cancer, and low socioeconomic status^[6-8]. This study aims at studying the prevalence and factors associated with various cervical lesions (inflammatory, pre-malignant, and malignant).

Patients and methods

A cross sectional study was carried out at the gynecology and obstetric outpatient

¹Dept. Community Medicine, ²Dept. Pathology, College of Medicine, Al-Nahrain University.

Address correspondence to: Dr: Maysaloun M. Al-Ani, e-mail: maysams92@hotmail.com

Received 27th May 2002; Accepted 4th September 2005