

## THE AWARENESS AND PREVENTATION OF BREAST CANCER AMONG YOUNG WOMEN

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**Background.** Breast cancer is one of the most common female oncological diseases. A large proportion of young women are not sufficiently informed about breast cancer and its prevention, and, while trying to diagnose it as early as possible and avoid greater complications, this unawareness becomes a big problem.

**Purpose.** To analyze awareness of breast cancer and its prevention among young women.

**Material and methods.** In order to complete this analysis a questionnaire of nineteen questions was drawn up. Contingent of this quantitative research consisted of 62 young (18 – 24 years) women studying at Vilniaus Kolegija/UAS Faculty of Health Care. The average age was 20 years, while mode was 19. The questionnaire in use was supplemented with queries about self-exploration of breasts. All the data were processed using *Microsoft Office Excel 2013* program.

**Results.** The survey found out that 77.4% of respondents possess insufficient knowledge on the subject, while 3.2% lack any information whatsoever. It was noted that 13% women did not know nipple changes are one of the symptoms, which can help identify the breast cancer.

According to women, main sources of information related to breast cancer were the internet (95%) and the press (84%). The least information was obtained from the nurses (15% of women); 11% of the respondents thought this information was useful.

It was found out that breast introspection is more frequently performed (63%) by young women over the age of 20 years. The evaluation of the questionnaire suggests that 18% of respondents overestimated their knowledge.

**Conclusions.** It was found that the breast cancer awareness among young women is not sufficient; the least women know about the risk factors, such as early menstruation, abortion, not giving a birth and that the larger breasts mean a greater risk to develop aforementioned disease.

The study shows that respondents either perform breast introspection rarely or simply do not know how to do it correctly; women under 20 years of age are less likely to perform breast examinations; very little information is obtained from a gynecologist, family doctor and nurse. The main source of information is the internet.