Health empowerment of pre menopausal women in prevention of cardiovascular disease, cancer breast, cancer cervix and type 2 diabetes mellitus

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ABSTRACT

Background of study

One of the most significant challenges for contemporary nursing is helping women preserve their health after menopause when she is susceptible to cardiovascular diseases, cancer breast, cancer cervix and type 2 diabetes mellitus. Pre menopause represents an opportunity for nurses to establish preventive health goals and helping women understand how they can be responsible for their own well being. Hence the researcher as a nurse and as an educator strongly feels committed to health empowerment of pre menopausal women and preventing the four conditions that are associated with high morbidity and mortality in the menopausal period.

Methods

A quasi experimental approach using the non equivalent control group before and after designing was used for the study. A total sample of 200 pre menopausal women teachers between the ages of 35 to menopause from local schools and colleges were recruited with 100 in the experimental arm and 100 in the control arm for the study. The study was done in three phases, where 1st phase involved collecting the demographic data, assessing menopausal severity, attitude and the knowledge pre test. The 2nd phase included the biochemical tests, health assessment of subjects and health empowerment programme (HEP) by the researcher. The HEP consisted of education and skill training towards health promotion in the menopausal period. The 3rd phase involved the biochemical tests, health assessment and the knowledge post tests. The data was compiled and analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics.
**Results**

Risk factor assessment carried out by the researcher through standardized online tests showed that 44 women had one or more risk factors for CVD in 10 years. 37 women had 1 or more risk factors for a 5 year breast cancer risk. With reference to cancer cervix 50 women had I risk factor. 94 women had 2 risk factors and 56 women had 2 or more risk factors present. 162 women presented with a single risk factor for type 2 diabetes mellitus and 38 women had 2 or more risk factors associated with type 2 diabetes mellitus. When statistically correlated, the risk factors with age with age and education, it showed that there was no relationship between the risk factors to age or education.

The analysis of the symptoms experienced by the pre menopausal women showed that hot flashes, anxiety and physical and mental exhaustion was the most common symptom experienced among the women. The least experienced symptom was sleep disturbances and bladder problems. The severity of menopausal symptoms in different age group showed that the severity of symptoms were strongly associated with increasing age.

The menopausal attitude revealed that 4.5% of subjects had a favorable attitude, 81.5% had a moderately favorable attitude and 14% had a highly favorable attitude towards menopause though the attitude was not related to the age or education.

When comparing the experimental and control groups it was evident that the HEP significantly increased (P<0.01) in all life style practices, selected health outcomes (systolic and diastolic blood pressure, anthropometric measurements and biochemical values) and health seeking behaviour (exercise patter, diet, SBE, mammogram and Pap smear)

**Conclusion:**
The study concluded that nurses can initiate programs to educate and empower premenopausal women to manage their health. Screening and regular assessment of women and preventive measures can reduce the morbidity and mortality related with cardiovascular diseases, breast cancer, cervix cancer and type 2 diabetes mellitus. This study finding has a direct implication for the future of prevention of non-communicable diseases among Indian women of the perimenopausal period.

Keywords

Premenopause; Perimenopause; post menopause; cancer of breast; cancer of cervix; type 2 diabetes mellitus; cardiovascular diseases;