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Knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding cervical cancer screening among physicians in the Western Region of Saudi Arabia.

[Sait KH.](#)

Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology, Faculty of Medicine, King Abdulaziz University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. khalidsait@yahoo.com

Abstract

OBJECTIVE:

To evaluate knowledge and practice of the Pap test, the role of HPV in the etiology of cervical cancer, and attitudes regarding the HPV vaccine of female physicians in the Western Region of Saudi Arabia.

METHODS:

A cross-sectional descriptive study using an interview with a structured questionnaire to obtain information regarding cervical cancer, practice in screening for cervical cancer, and attitudes of female physicians regarding the HPV vaccine in different health facilities in Saudi Arabia. The study was performed in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Faculty of Medicine, King Abdulaziz University Hospital, Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, between May and December 2009.

RESULTS:

Of the 200 respondents, 70 (35%) physicians comprised gynecological doctors (GDs) group I, and 130 (65%) physicians comprised the non-gynecological doctors (NGDs) group II. The mean age was 36 years. A total of 63 (90%) in group I, and 87 (60.5%) in group II knew that HPV is a cause for cervical cancer. Forty-five (64.3%) in group I, and 44 (33.8%) in group II believed that cervical cancer was curable ($p < 0.05$). A total of 182 (91%) physicians in the GDs and NGDs group knew that the Pap smear test is used as a screening method for cervical cancer. A total of 97 (48.5%) physicians knew about the HPV vaccine. When the physicians were provided with information regarding the HPV vaccine, 100 (50%) physicians stated they would recommend the vaccine to their patients.

CONCLUSION:

Physicians in Saudi Arabia would benefit from further education regarding the available screening, prevention for HPV, and cervical cancer.