

Breast Cancer and Selected Lifestyle Variables: A Case-Control Study

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Objective: To determine the association between selected lifestyle risk factors and breast cancer.

Setting: Al-Sadar Teaching Hospital and the Oncology Centre, University of Basrah.

Design: Case control study.

Method: One hundred and thirty-four women with histologically proven breast cancer were included in the study. The controls were 269 women who were apparently healthy and without any evidence of breast cancer. Cases and controls were group matched for age and place of residence. The study lasted from 1st of January to 30th of October 2006. Special questionnaire was designed for the study.

Result: In the study, the following factors had significant association with the risk of breast cancer: level of education, early menarche, older age at the birth of the first child, abstinence of breast feeding, lack of consumption of fruits and vegetables and consumption of animal fat.

Conclusion: The study recommends early detection of breast cancer within the framework of a comprehensive cancer control program, encourage breast feeding for a period of 1-2 years, promotion of healthy diet, low animal fat intake, low carbohydrate and increase intake of fruit and vegetable and promotion of physical activity program.

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