

**AWARENESS REGARDING EARLY DETECTION TECHNIQUES OF BREAST CANCER  
AND KNOWLEDGE REGARDING SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF BREAST CANCER:  
COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN BREAST CANCER PATIENTS OF APEKSHA  
HOSPITAL AND WOMEN WHO ATTENDED CLINICS, PILIYANDALA MOH**

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Breast cancer is a type of cancer that develops from breast tissue and is considered the most common cancer among Sri Lankan women. The objectives of this research were to assess the awareness regarding early detection techniques of breast cancer and the knowledge regarding signs and symptoms between two different groups. A descriptive cross sectional comparative study was conducted between two groups and the study was carried out in the clinics of Apeksha Hospital Maharagama and at well woman clinics in MOH area Piliyandala. Each cohort consisted of 317 participants within the age range of 30-65. They were selected randomly and data collection was done using a self-administered questionnaire. Data analysis was done using SPSS version 23. Among the women in Apeksha hospital, the most known early detection technique (EDT) was clinical breast examination (CBE) (91.80%). The least known EDT was magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) which was found to be 62.80%. In the MOH, the most known EDT was breast

self-examination (BSE). It was 80.10% and least known EDT was Mammography (32.80%). Most identified sign and symptom for both study samples was lump or thickening in the breast. It was 93.40% for Apeksha cohort and 79.50% for MOH cohort. When comparing the study samples, the sample of Apeksha Hospital, Maharagama had fairly good knowledge about signs, symptoms and early detection techniques. Therefore, the knowledge regarding signs and symptoms should be improved among the women in MOH areas. Throughout the entire study the average practice and knowledge of women with breast cancer was maintained at a precise level than the women who attending MOH clinics. The awareness of women participating MOH clinics must be improved by introducing health education programs at the clinics.

**Keywords:** Awareness, Breast Cancer, Comparative Study, Early Detection Techniques (EDT), Signs and Symptoms