Factors Associated with Breast Cancer among Women Patients Attending Kenyatta National Hospital, Kenya – 2008.

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment for the Degree of Master of Science in Applied Epidemiology in the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

2009

ABSTRACT

Breast cancer is the second most common cancer in the world. Its incidence in Kenya is increasing. Factors associated with breast cancer have been studied elsewhere. There, exists a knowledge gap on the factors associated with the disease in Kenya.

An age-matched case control study was carried out with the aim of determining factors associated with breast cancer in female patients at Kenyatta National Hospital in 2008. Cases were adult female breast cancer patients. Controls were adult female non-breast cancer patients.

Sixty four cases and sixty four controls were interviewed. Using univariate analysis, having primary or no formal education (mOR = 0.40), having the first conception at or before age 24 (mOR = 0.31), attaining menopause at age 49 or earlier (mOR = 0.10), and having 36 or less years of fertility (mOR = 0.09) were associated with a reduced chance of having breast cancer. Being overweight (BMI ≥ 25) (mOR = 6.60) or being in formal occupation (mOR = 5.00) were associated with an increased chance of having breast cancer.

The following factors were significantly associated with breast cancer in logistic regression: having regular monthly menstrual cycles (mOR = 19.24), having menstrual cycles of 28 days or less (mOR = 12.91), having conceived 3 times or less (mOR = 16.08), attaining menarche by age 14 (mOR = 9.39) and residing in a rural setting (mOR = 16.43).

There is need to revise and disseminate policy guidelines for women breast cancer health education, screening, care and treatment. Health workers should be updated on the factors

found to be associated with breast cancer so as to enrich targeted screening. Escalating health education of women could advance early diagnosis.