

Prevalence of menopausal symptoms among women attained menopause at selected village

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Abstract

Introduction: Menopause is a natural phenomenon, but then it causes many symptoms which deteriorates the health of the women and makes her trouble for the increased chance of many complications. Hence identification of symptoms of menopause among women will help them for health seeking behavior.

Objective: To assess the prevalence of menopausal symptoms among women attained menopause.

Methodology: Quantitative approach and Cross sectional research design was adopted for the present study. The study was conducted in Guduvancherry a selected rural village of Kattankulathur. 50 participants were selected by Non Probability purposive sampling. Check list was used to assess the menopausal symptoms.

Results: Out of 50 mothers majority 64% (32) of the mothers reported moderate symptoms, 32% (16) of the mothers experienced mild symptoms and only 4% (2) of the mothers experienced severe symptoms.

Key words: Menopause; Symptoms; Treatment; Experience;

Introduction

Menopause is the process through which a woman ceases to be fertile or menstruate. It is a normal part of life and is not considered a disease or a condition. Symptoms may occur years before a woman's final period. Some women may experience symptoms for months or years afterward. Despite being a natural process in the body of any woman, menopause can cause drastic changes that trigger severe symptoms.

While menopause is not a disease or disorder, it does trigger some profound changes in a woman's body. A diagnosis of menopause is confirmed when a woman has not had a menstrual period for one year. However, the symptoms of menopause generally appear before the end of that one-year period. Without treatment, symptoms usually taper off over a period of 2 to 5 years. However, symptoms can persist for longer. In some cases, vaginal dryness, itching, and discomfort can become chronic and eventually get worse without treatment. [1]

With the aging of the worldwide population in the coming decades, it is estimated that 1.2 billion women worldwide will be

menopausal or postmenopausal by the year 2030. [2] Common symptoms of menopause include vasomotor symptoms (VMS, defined as hot flushes and/or night sweats), sleep disturbances, and vaginal dryness. [3] It is estimated that as many as 85% of postmenopausal women have experienced a menopause-related symptom in their lifetime. [4] Prevalence of VMS alone is estimated at approximately 40 to 50 million women in the United States. Symptom prevalence and severity generally increase with advancing reproductive stage, which ranges from late reproductive, early menopause transition, late menopause transition, to post menopause. [5]

With increasing life expectancy, women spend 1/3rd of life in this phase. [6] It is estimated that by the end of 2015 there will be 130 million elderly women in India, necessitating substantial amount of care. [7] Menopausal symptoms, though well tolerated by some women, may be particularly troublesome in others. Severe symptoms compromise overall quality of life for those experiencing them. There is under-reporting of symptoms among Indian women due to socio cultural factors. According to literature, at least 60% of ladies suffer from mild symptoms and 20% suffer severe symptoms and 20% from no symptoms. [8]

Singh A, Pradhan SK conducted a cross sectional study on Menopausal symptoms of postmenopausal women in a rural area of New Delhi among 252 postmenopausal women from October 2011 to March 2013. A pretested, self-designed, semi structured, interview based, oral questionnaire was used. The mean age at attaining menopause was 46.24 (Standard Deviation = 3.38) years. Only 4 (1.6%) postmenopausal women had premature menopause. A total of 225 (89.3%) postmenopausal women experienced at least one or more menopausal symptom(s). The most common complaints of postmenopausal women were sleep disturbances (62.7%), muscle or joint pain (59.1%), hot flushes (46.4%) and night sweats (45.6%). A total of 32.1% (n=81) postmenopausal women suffered from depression and 21.0% (n=53) postmenopausal women suffered from anxiety. [9]

Menopausal health demands priority in Indian scenario due to increase in life expectancy and growing population of menopausal women. Most are either unaware or do not pay

adequate attention to these symptoms. Hence identification of symptoms of menopause among women will help them for health seeking behaviour which strengthens them to engage themselves in health promotion and lifestyle modifications.

Methodology

Quantitative approach and Cross sectional research design was adopted for the present study. The variables studied are study variables and demographic variables. The study variable was prevalence of menopause where as the demographic variables includes age, number of children, occupational status, menopausal age and type of family. The study was conducted in guduvancherry a selected rural village of Kattankulathur. Participants consisted of women who attained menopause between 45-50 years village who full filled the inclusion criteria. The sample size for the present study was 50.

Non probability purposive sampling technique was adopted to select the samples for the study. Inclusion criteria which includes (i) women who belongs to the age group of 45-50 years(ii) women who attained menopause (iii) women who are willing to participate in this study,(iv) women who were available at the time of data collection. The exclusion criteria includes women those who are not co-operative and the women with severe medical condition. The tool used for data collection was

Section A - Structured questionnaire to elicit demographic data among women attained menopause

Section B - Check list to assess the symptoms of menopause comprises of 21 symptoms

The content of the tools were established on the basis of opinion of one medical expert and three nursing experts. Suggestions were incorporated in the tool. The reliability of the tool was established by test retest method. The r value obtained was 0.8 which indicates the positive correlation.. Informed consent was obtained from each participant for the study before starting data collection. Assurance was given to the subjects that anonymity of each individual would be maintained are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

After obtaining formal approval from administration from the medical officer. The investigator explained the objectives and methods of data collection. Data collection was done within the given period of one week in selected village. The data collection was done during the day time. Self introduction about the researcher and details about the study was explained to the participants and their consent was obtained. Prevalence of menopausal symptoms was assessed using symptom checklist. The confidentiality about the data and finding were assured to the participants, each participant was interviewed for 15-20 minutes to complete the checklist and their co-operation was imperative. Descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage distribution was used to analyze the data collected data. SPSS 16 version was used to analyse the collected data.

Results

The above table depicts the demographic characteristics of the women attained menopause. Considering age majority of the women 44% belong to the age group of 47- 48 years. With respect to number of children most of the women had 2 children. Majority of the women were not employed, 44% of the women attained menopause at the age of 47-48 years and majority of the women belong to nuclear family.

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of Demographic data

Demographic variables	Frequency	Percentage	
Age in years	45-46	17	34
	47-48	22	44
	49-50	11	21
Number of children	1	3	6
	2	21	42
	3	16	32
	>3	10	20
Occupational status	Employed	18	36
	Not employed	32	64
Menopausal age	45-46	18	36
	47-48	22	44
	49-50	10	20
Type of family	Nuclear	30	60
	Joint	20	40
N=50			

Table 2: Prevalence of Menopausal symptoms among women attained menopause

Level of menopausal symptoms	Frequency	Percentage
Mild	16	32
Moderate	32	64
Severe	02	04
N= 50		

Table 2 reveals the prevalence of menopausal symptoms among women attained menopause

Out of 50 mothers majority 64% (32) of the mothers reported moderate symptoms, 32 % (16) of the mothers experienced mild symptoms and only 4 % (2) of the mothers experienced severe symptoms.

Discussion

Menopause is a unique stage of female reproductive cycle, a transition from reproductive to non reproductive stage. Menopause is a natural phenomenon, but then it causes many symptoms which deteriorates the health of the women and makes her trouble for the increased chance of many complications. In the menopausal years many women undergo noticeable and clinically observable physical changes resulting from hormonal fluctuations

The present study findings revealed that Out of 50 mothers majority 64% (32) of the mothers reported moderate symptoms, 32% (16) of the mothers experienced mild symptoms and only 4% (2) of the mothers experienced severe symptoms. Harvey chim et al., (2012) Conducted a similar study on the prevalence of menopausal symptoms in a community in Singapore. The objective of the study was to describe the prevalence and severity of menopausal symptoms experienced by Singaporean women aged 40–60, and to elucidate social and lifestyle factors associated with these symptoms, as well as the average age of menopause. A population based prevalence survey was carried out on a representative sample of 495 Singaporean women aged 40–60 to determine the prevalence of 17 symptoms commonly associated with the menopause and the mean age of menopause. *Results revealed that* the participant rate was 69.3%; mean age of participants was 49.0 years (range=40–59 years) with a racial distribution of 84.3% Chinese, 8.3% Malay and 7.4% Indian. Classical menopausal symptoms such as, hot flushes (17.6%), vaginal dryness (20.7%) and night sweats (8.9%) were less commonly reported than somatic symptoms. The most prevalent symptom reported was low backache with aching muscles and joints (51.4%). Perimenopausal women (n=124) experienced a significantly higher prevalence of vasomotor, urogenital and psychological symptoms compared with pre-perimenopausal (n=178) and post-perimenopausal women (n=133). [10]

Another similar study was conducted by Pathak N, Shivaswamy M S [2018] Prevalence of menopausal symptoms among postmenopausal women of urban Belagavi. A community-based cross-sectional study was conducted between January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2016, using a predesigned, pretested, structured questionnaire based on sociodemographic variables and menopausal symptoms as per the menopause-specific quality of life questionnaire. A total of 345 postmenopausal women aged 40–60 years residing in the field practice area of Urban Health Centre, Ashok Nagar, and Belagavi, were selected by systematic random sampling technique and interviewed during house-to-house visit. The outcomes of this study were menopausal symptoms in the postmenopausal women: In this study, the mean age among study participants was 52.04 ± 5.58 years. Majority 200 (58%) were Hindus, while 266 (77.1%) were literates. The most common menopausal symptoms were of physical domain (75.7%–25.5%), followed by psychosocial domain (63.9%–49.3%) to vasomotor domain (63.5%–55.4%) and least common sexual domain (42.3%–36.2%). [11]

Conclusion

Majority of the women 64% experienced moderate symptoms in the current study. Hence Information education and communication activities to increase awareness about menopause problems among general public, family members, and middle-aged women population should be undertaken. Looking at the national-level, health care in India pays little

importance to the menopausal health problems. Reproductive and Child Health Programme should be extended to include postmenopausal women. With rising population of menopausal women in India, a public health program, focusing exclusively on the post reproductive age group, is the need of the hour.

Strengths Of The Study

- Identification of the prevalence of menopausal symptoms among the women motivated the investigator to create awareness among the women regarding physiological and psychological symptoms which helped them to cope with the problems
- The investigator referred 2 participants with severe menopausal symptoms to the nearest health centre for treatment

Implications

- Periodical awareness programme on menopausal symptoms and coping mechanisms to be organised by the health care providers in the community
- Nursing administrators in various health care setting need to support and provide resources to the health care providers to organize such health programmes in the community
- Educational materials regarding menopausal symptoms and home management need to prepare by the Nursing leaders and administrators for the benefit of the women.
- Interventional or Experimental Research can be conducted related to home management of menopausal symptoms.

Limitations Of The Study

- The investigator was not able to include more than 50 participants because of the limited time period. Hence generalization could not be possible.

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