

76. **KNOWLEDGE OF CANCER AMONG SYRIANS: A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY.**

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INTRODUCTION: The worldwide burden of cancer continues to rise, mainly due to global demographic changes and an increase in cancer-causing habits, such as smoking, especially in low-income countries. The Syrian National Cancer Registry (SNCR) estimates that 17,599 new cancer cases were diagnosed before the start of the war in 2011. According to statistics from the Al Bairouni 2020 hospital-based registry, which includes data on more than 60% of Syrian cancer patients, the number of cancer diagnoses has been rising in Syria. There is no research conducted in Syria to determine people's knowledge about cancer and risk factors, symptoms, and signs. This research aims to determine how well-informed Syrians were on the following topics: (i) the age-related risk and prevalence of cancer; (ii) cancer signs and symptoms; and (iii) cancer risk factors. In addition, determining how well-informed different demographic categories.

METHODS: This is a cross-sectional study which was conducted in Syria. Participants who were eligible to participate in the study who were residents of Syria irrespective their age or gender. The instrument of survey was a structured questionnaire the content of which was adapted from the validated cancer awareness measure (CAM) the cam was translated to Arabic and a scoring system was applied to the questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed via several social media platforms. **RESULTS:** A total of 1463 participants completed the questionnaire. There were 768 respondents (52.5%) said that there is no relation between age and cancer. Almost all the participants (85.6%) thought that the breast cancer is the most common cancer among women, while around half of the participants (55.1%) reported that the prostate cancer was the most common cancer among males. The most frequently reported cancer symptom was unexplained weight loss (73.2%), followed by unexplained swelling/lump (66.5%). The level of knowledge about cancer signs/symptoms among the participants were good in 623 (42.6%), fair in 594 (40.6%), and poor in 246 (16.8%). The most commonly recognized risks of cancer were smoking (83.5%). **CONCLUSION:** According to this research, taking into consideration the war and the bad economic situation that Syria is facing, Syrians' knowledge towards cancer is acceptable. However, it is not meeting the ideal expectations. More research should be held to dig deeper into this issue.

Key words: Knowledge; Cancer; Awareness; Syria.