

ORIGINAL PAPER

Mammography screening in Greece: An exploratory survey of women's views, experiences and behaviours.

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Abstract

Background: Internationally, breast cancer comprises 29% of all cancer incidences. In Greece, 1,500-1,800 women die annually from breast cancer out of the 4,000 who are affected. Only 5% are detected at an early disease stage through mammography screening.

Aim: This paper presents findings from a study exploring the factors that influence Greek women's mammography screening behaviour.

Methodology: Data were collected in Athens-Greece, during the period March-July 2008, from individuals who were members of six women's associations. One hundred and eighty six questionnaires were completed and 33 interviews were conducted from a sub-sample. This paper reports the findings from the questionnaire survey.

Results: Participants had a variety of demographic characteristics with 85% of them having attended mammography screening. Only 61% of them intended to continue in the future. The majority of women agreed with a number of factors which supported their decision to participate in regular mammography screening, such as doctors' encouragement and mammogram efficacy to detect breast cancer at an early stage, while anxiety was identified as a possible inhibitor to their participation.

Conclusion: Women's mammography screening behaviour and perceptions of mammography screening appeared to be positive in relation to their participation. However, the reasons as to why a large number of women indicated they were unlikely to go for mammography screening again is not known, and needs further investigation.

Key words: Mammography screening, women's behaviour, breast screening, early detection, breast cancer, factors.