

Babylon University – College Of Medicine  
Department of Community Medicine

*Lectures in Community Medicine  
For 4<sup>th</sup> Stage Students  
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## Lecture 31

# Epidemiology of Breast Cancer

Affects mainly females. It is the commonest type of all female cancers in Iraq.

### Risk factors:

#### A- Host risk factors:

- 1- Females > males
- 2- Age: peak 40-50 years.
- 3- Breast cancer is more prevalent in higher socioeconomic standard.
- 4- Menstruation: females with early menarche and late menopause are at risk.
- 5- Parity:
  - Nulliparas women are at risk.
  - Multiparas especially when breast feeding was not followed and breast was usually engorged with milk.  
Delay of first child birth especially after the age of 35 years.
- 6- Morbidity: increase incidence in cases who has history of cancer of one breast, or who had cancer body uterus.
- 7- Family history of breast cancer: incidence is higher in families having cases of breast cancer.
- 8- Presence of precancerous lesion as papilloma, cystic hyperplasia or abnormal nipple discharge.
- 9- Trauma to the breast may be also a predisposing factor.

#### B- Environmental risk factors:

- 1- Hormonal disturbance due to endogenous or exogenous causes that lead to increase estrogen, progesterone or prolactin.
- 2- Contraceptive pills are incriminated when used continuously for long period and also when used after the age of 35 years.

**Prevention:**

- 1- Avoid risk factors.
- 2- Encourage breast feeding.
- 3- Proper family planning services.
- 4- Breast examination either by the women herself or during comprehensive medical examination and in follow up examination during the use of contraceptive pills.

**Control:**

- Tumors markers for early case detection.
- Increase the awareness of females for self examination of both breasts. Once per month (better after menstrual period).
- Seeking medical care once any breast swelling is felt.
- Mammography: to screen at risk group as those with positive family history.