

**Background:** Breast self examination (BSE) is one of the basic and most important screening methods for the early detection of breast cancer and other diseases related to the breast. Given the increasing incidence of breast cancer in Uganda, and the limited resources available to promote more advanced screening methods e.g. clinical breast exam and mammography, BSE remains the most appropriate and cost effective method of screening to be promoted in the fight against breast cancer. The prevalence of breast lumps is common in females ages 20 and above.

This underscores the need for mass screening and awareness campaigns among younger women. BSE is encouraged among this group since it allows one to examine their own breasts for any abnormalities and to feel for the lumps which prompt one to seek early medical attention.

**Objective:** The purpose of this study was to assess BSE practices for cancer detection among female students of Ndejje university Kampala branch.

**Method:** this was a descriptive cross sectional study. Surveys were collected from 314 female university students of Ndejje university Kampala branch. Data was collected using standardized semi structured and self administered questionnaires. SPSS Version 20.0 was used to analyze data.

**Results:** majority of the respondents (72.6%) had knowledge on BSE; while 27.4% reported no knowledge on BSE. In terms of attitude, 79% of the respondents had a positive attitude towards BSE. Majority (50.3%) agreed that it was necessary for one to practice BSE in order to discover breast cancer. However, only 12.1% knew when to have the BSE done. In terms of sources of information: 109 (43%) had heard about BSE from a health worker; while 79% of these had appositive attitude towards BSE. However, only 22.3% of respondents frequently practiced BSE despite a large number (64.2%) of them knowing that it is meant to be done every month.

**Conclusions:** Study results indicate that the frequency of practice of BSE continues to be low despite the population having the relevant knowledge as well as a positive attitude towards BSE. Health care providers and organizations involved in the dissemination of information on BSE, need to emphasize the importance active, consistent and regular BSE practices to address the frequency gap in BSE practices. Proper knowledge and positive attitudes towards BSE need to translate into actions that support adherence to regular habits of BSE. An increased level of BSE practices for early detection of breast cancer requires individuals to integrate all three dimensions (knowledge, attitude and frequency).