

Cervical Cancer Screening Among Thai Women*

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Abstract

Cervical cancer is found primarily in Thai women 35 to 60 years old. This article reports utilization of cervical cancer screening and factors associated with high rates of screening. Data were obtained from the Provincial Health Survey, 2001 conducted by the Bureau of Policy and Strategy, Ministry of Public Health. The survey included 120,141 women: a) most were married, had elementary education, lived in non-municipal areas and had health insurance; and b) around 40-45% were 45-59 years old; were agricultural, fishery, mineral workers, or hunters; and lived in the Northeastern region.

About 25% of the women utilized cervical cancer screening. Abnormal PAP smears were found in less than 1% of women who utilized cervical cancer screening. Cross-tabulation revealed that the women screened more frequently than others were: a) 35-44 years old, married, and educated beyond secondary level; b) mainly professional, academic, or administrative workers; c) lived in municipal areas and the Northern region; and d) had health insurance. The Chi-square test confirmed that all cross-tabulated variables were statistically significant at 0.05.

The findings implied that the Ministry of Public Health and related institutes should: a) encourage women to screen for cervical cancer; b) educate them about the adverse outcomes of cervical cancer; c) provide and promote free cervical cancer screening programs; and d) distribute mobile cervical cancer screening for convenience and improved access.

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