

Wake up women, stand against cervical cancer

DR ASHRAFUNNESSA

Cervical cancer which affects lower third of uterus (also called cervix) is the most common cancer in women in Bangladesh. It constitutes about one fourth of the total number of female cancers patient in Bangladesh. An estimated about 13,000 new cases and 6600 deaths occur every year in Bangladesh. Most of these deaths are preventable if they would be detected early.

Ironically, 80 percent of the women with cervical cancer come for treatment at an advanced and inoperable stage due to the ignorance about regular check-up and screening services, lack of adequate and widespread screening facilities.

Many women never attend hospitals and they accept death for granted. Usually they do not know about the prevention and treatment options of cervical cancer. Other important factors of high prevalence of cervical cancer in Bangladesh are marriage at young age, polygamy, sexually transmitted diseases, low socio-economic condition, low educational level and so on.

Cervical cancer can be detected by different screening tests called Pap

smear test and HPV test, Visual Inspection of Cervix with Acetic Acid (VIA). Among the methods, VIA has been introduced by the Government of Bangladesh to screen mass population due to its cost effectiveness and easy to use method.

Treatment is usually performed as an outpatient procedure under local anaesthesia and has an effective cure rate (80-96 percent) for most pre-cancers. All treated women are checked once every year for the next three years. This follow up is recommended to make sure that the abnormality has been adequately treated. In this way cervical cancer can be prevented.

Another method of cervical cancer prevention is vaccination against Human Papillomavirus (HPV), another common cause of cancer.

VIA was accepted as a feasible method of cervical cancer screening in Bangladesh as it is relatively simple. It needs minimum infrastructure support and the result of the procedure is available immediately. All the government medical college hospitals, district hospitals, maternal and child welfare centres and some of the urban primary health



Spreading awareness of cervical cancer through health education seen in this photo can make a big difference in the life of many women who are entirely ignorant of free cervical cancer screening called VIA, early treatment option and prevention.

care centres have facilities for VIA test free of cost for the last few years by the support of UNFPA Bangladesh and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) who are helping GOB in expansion of these facilities. Please support women getting the diag-

nostic facility and convey the message to your near and dear ones to help her prevent cervical cancer.

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Crucial role of Zinc in pregnancy



DR SHAHJADA SELIM

Pregnancy and lactation are the special conditions when women need to have special attention on diet and supplements rich in vitamins like folic acid and minerals like Zinc. It is crucial for maintaining a healthy pregnancy and feeding the baby with optimum nutrition. As the demand increases, women should intake more amount of Zinc at this time. But most

women are unaware about it.

The Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA) for pregnant women is 11 milligrams per day and 12 milligrams per day in lactation. A report published in 1992 in American Journal of Epidemiology revealed that low Zinc intake was associated with approximately a two-fold increase in risk of low birth weight and low Zinc intake earlier in pregnancy was associated with more than a trebling of pre-term delivery.

A research published in medical journal The Lancet noted that by the sixth month of lactation, even a well-nourished mother may provide her child with insufficient Zinc. Breastfed babies who received Zinc supplements grew significantly in length and weight over those given a dietary source of Zinc

Rich sources of Zinc are oysters, beef, liver, seafood, poultry, nuts and seeds, whole grains, yogurt, wheat germ, tofu, peanuts and peanut butter, legumes and milk. Zinc found in breast milk is better absorbed than that of in formula milk. Fruits and vegetables are not generally good sources of Zinc.

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Ways to manage toothache and prevent the next attack

DR KAZI MD NIAZUR RAHMAN

Toothache is a very common symptom experienced by people of all ages. The painful condition usually occurs when a nerve in the tooth root is inflamed or irritated.

Various conditions may lead to toothache, among which tooth decay is the primary cause for most. Other common causes



include dental abscess, gum disease, irritation of the tooth root, cracked tooth syndrome, temporomandibular joint (TMJ) disorders, impaction and eruption.

Often, toothache can be a sign of a much deeper condition. The severity of pain may vary, in terms of the sensitivity and pain inten-

sity. No matter what type of toothache you suffer from, you should get it evaluated by a dentist.

During the condition you should avoid very hot and cold foods and drinks, as they worsen the problem. You can take recommended first dose of over the counter painkillers like Paracetamol to get instant relieve before you step

will use different methods to treat it. If the pain is due to tooth decay, restoration by filling of different composition is done. If the pulp of the tooth is damaged, root canal therapy is usually needed. If the damage cannot be treated by these methods, or if the tooth is impacted, it may need to be extracted.

Consult a dentist when you have signs of infection, such as swelling, pain on bite, red gums or a foul-tasting discharge, pain longer than one or two days, pain with fever, trouble breathing or swallowing.

You can prevent toothache easily by maintaining good dental hygiene practices. Cut down the amount of sugar in your diet. Excessively sweet foods and drinks should be consumed only occasionally. Follow a twice-a-day brushing routine using fluoride-containing toothpaste. Remember to brush from above downwards; not side by side. Also brush your gums and tongue. Use dental floss to clean between your teeth. Avoid smoking as it worsens dental conditions. Get your teeth check regularly, and have them cleaned at least once a year by a dentist.

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FERTILITY PRESERVATION

For a better-quality of life for a woman

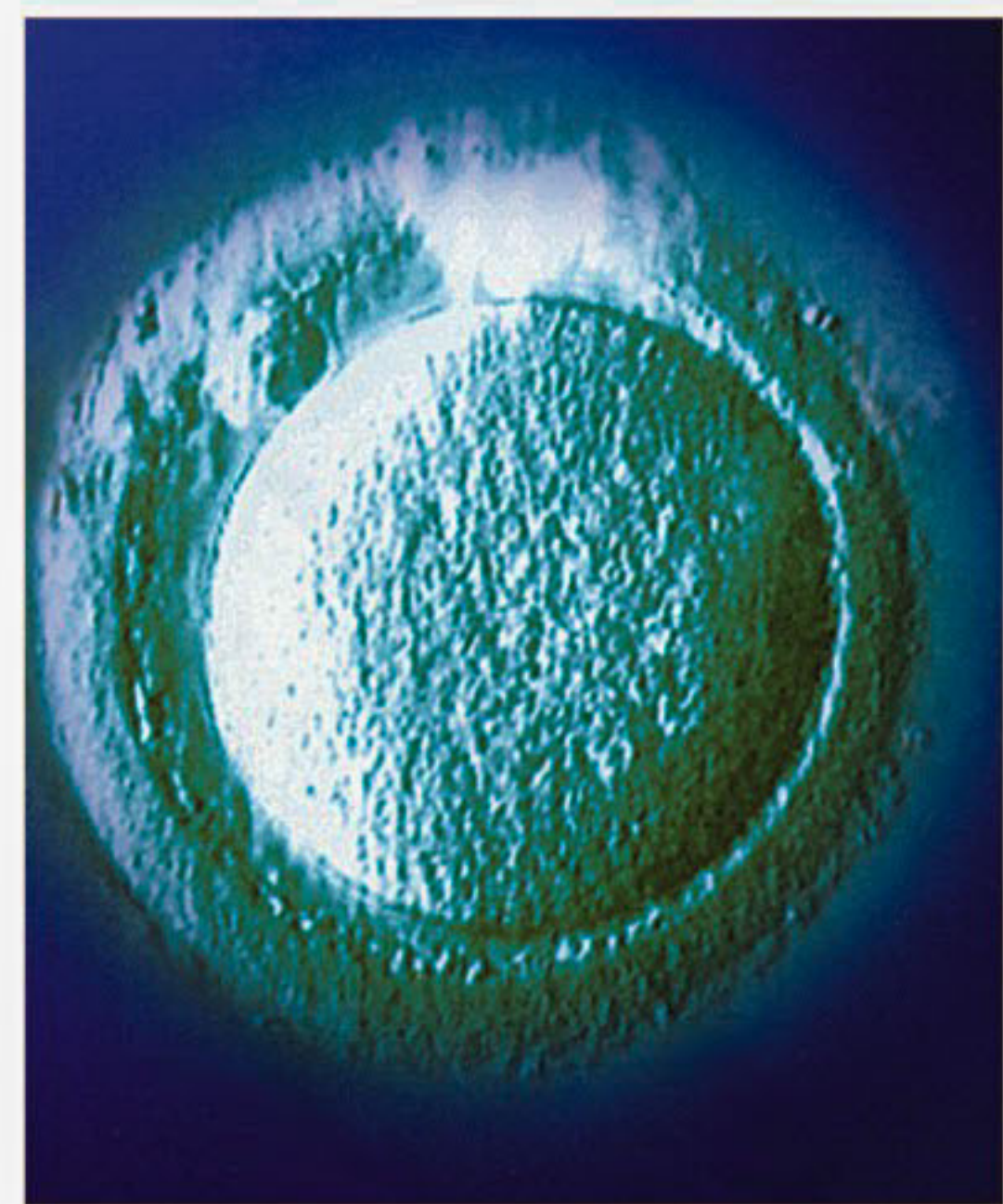
DR FATIMA MONTAZ

It is 21st century when people in this world have brought many dreams become the reality. We all demand for an improved quality of life. As a woman you have the right to preserve your fertility before you lose it. A woman needs to know available options are there for them, they just need to find it.

Cancer is not rare in younger women now-a-days. The necessary treatment for most of the common cancer types occurring in younger women implies either removal of the reproductive organs or cytotoxic treatment. Therefore, they will be losing their capability to procreate partially or definitively.

Educated working women have been delaying initiation of childbearing to later in life; therefore they may need to seek help in preserving their fertility. Indeed, because of proliferation of techniques to preserve fertility the number of options is increasing day by day. Some established procedures include embryo freezing and oocyte freezing. Some are still experimental, such as ovarian cortex freezing, ovarian slice freezing, whole ovary freezing.

Egg freezing also called vitrification and embryo freezing are rapidly advancing, breakthrough technology useful to preserve fertility in



Women at risk of fertility loss now can preserve fertility through breakthrough technology like egg freezing and embryo freezing. Later, when she wishes to become pregnant, these eggs/ embryos can be used.

certain circumstances causing infertility.

Because of variations in types of cancer, dose of chemotherapy, time available before the onset of treatment, patient's age and the partner's status, each case is unique and requires a different strategy of fertility preservation. Furthermore, embryo freezing is impossible to an unmarried woman in Bangladesh, so egg freezing could be an option. Worldwide egg freezing has been revolutionised by the method of vitrification in which a woman's eggs are extracted, frozen and stored. Later, when she wishes to become pregnant, the eggs can be thawed, fertilized, and transferred to the uterus as embryos. So you can restore personal autonomy before you lose your chance.

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Knowing for better living

Inappropriate use of **antibiotic** leads to antibiotic resistance !

Take antibiotic on Doctor's prescription

Complete the duration of antibiotic treatment even if the symptoms improve earlier

Store antibiotic in proper place

Do not take same antibiotic by yourself even for similar infection

Do not take antibiotic after expiry date



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