

Factors Influencing Time to Presentation, Diagnosis, and Treatment of patients with Esophageal Cancer at Moi teaching and Referral Hospital, Eldoret Kenya

Introduction: Esophageal Cancers are malignancies that develop in the tissue lining of the esophagus. Globally, esophageal cancer is ranked seventh commonest cancer and sixth cause of mortality. Kenya has an incidence of 17cases per 100,000 people, with 70-80% presenting for diagnosis at an advanced stage.

Objectives: To describe the factors influencing the time of presentation, diagnosis, and treatment of patients with esophageal cancer at Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital (MTRH)

Methodology: A Cross-sectional study design was used. The study population was patients with esophageal cancer seeking medical and surgical treatment at MTRH in March 2020 to January 2021. Data was collected from 104 participants using semi-structured questionnaires. Statistical analysis was done using R-4.1.0-win where descriptive statistics and Logistic regression were used to determine percentages and the associations between Factors and time of presentation and diagnosis of patients with esophageal cancer respectively.

Results: The mean age of participants was 57.2 years, 65.4% were males, and 7.8% were illiterate, and 39.2% didn't have health insurance. Majority 79.2% were diagnosed with stage III and IV. Patients with Monthly income above 20,000KSH ($p= 0.020$) were more likely to present early. Being widowed ($P= 0.019$), and having no medical insurance ($p= 0.0236$) were more likely to delay in diagnosis.

Conclusion: Income status, being widowed and without medical insurance are major factors that influence the time of presentation and diagnosis of patients with esophageal cancer at MTRH.

Recommendation: Financial constraint is a huge hindrance to early diagnosis of esophageal cancer, a precursor to better treatment outcomes. The government should therefore, put in place sustainable strategies that enable cancer diagnosis and treatment accessible and affordable.

Key words

esophageal cancers, cancer stage , presentation, diagnosis, treatment

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Track Classification: Cancer Research