CHALLENGES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF BREAST CANCER IN SUDAN

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Breast Cancer is the commonest cancer in Sudanese women, prevalence at the Radiation and Isotopes Center of Khartoum, RICK, the main Oncology center in Sudan, ranged between 29 and 34.5% since the establishment of the center in 1967. Age range between 16—79 years, with 3 peaks of age at 31-40, 41-50 and 51-60, the mean age is 47 years, similar to what is reported from the Arab world and 10 years less than the mean age in the west. Most patients present with advanced stage, due to a number of factors: lack of awareness, poverty, illiteracy, poor distribution of the limited medical resources and the negative role of traditional healers. Between 1967 and 2010: Stage 1 = 5 – 13 %, stage 2 =7 – 17 %, stage 3, 34-45%, and stage 4 = 15 – 25%, during the period between 2011 – 2014, the stage distribution was better, stage 1 = 17%, stage 2 = 14%, stage 3 = 49%. Receptors assay are not done for some patients mainly due to the cost. Other challenges include, lack of awareness about cancer among the public, survivies results showed that about 5% of women in North Sudan and 15% in Eastern Sudan don’t know anything about breast cancer. Jet alone its early detection methods, only one in one thousand females practice monthly Breast Self-Examination, much less than that heard about mammography. There is also lack of knowledge about early detection methods among medicals and para medicals. The higher prevalence of breast cancer during pregnancy was also noted, and the higher prevalence of male breast cancers 3% of all breast cancers compared to the west. Lack of effective health education, training of health personnel and screening, and the long waiting list for radiotherapy and the cost of targeted therapy are main challenges.

Competing Interests:
The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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