**Awareness of Palestinians about lung cancer symptoms: a national cross-sectional study**

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**Abstract**

The majority of lung cancer (LC) cases are diagnosed at an advanced stage. Poor awareness of LC symptoms is a contributor to late diagnosis. This study aimed to assess the awareness of LC symptoms among Palestinians, and to examine the factors associated with displaying good awareness.

Participants were recruited from hospitals, primary healthcare centers and public spaces using convenience sampling. A translated-into-Arabic version of the validated LC awareness measure was used to assess recognition of 14 LC symptoms. One point was given for each recognized symptom: poor (0–4), fair (5–9), and good (10–14). Multivariable logistic regression was used to examine the association between participant characteristics and having good awareness. The multivariable analysis adjusted for age-group, gender, education, monthly income, occupation, residence, marital status, any chronic disease, knowing someone with cancer, smoking history, and site of data collection.

With 4817 completed the questionnaire (response rate = 93.1%) and 4762 were included in the final analysis. Of these, 2742 (56.9%) were from the West Bank and Jerusalem (WBJ) and 2020 (43.1%) were from the Gaza Strip. The most recognized respiratory LC symptom was ‘worsening in an existing cough’(81.6%) while the least recognized was ‘a cough that does not go away for two or three weeks’(62.0%). The most recognized non-respiratory LC symptom was ‘persistent tiredness or lack of energy’(67.3%) while the least recognized was ‘persistent shoulder pain’(24.6%).

A total of 2466 participants (51.8%) displayed good awareness of LC symptoms. Factors associated with a higher likelihood to display good awareness included female gender, having post-secondary education, being employed, knowing someone with cancer, and visiting hospitals and primary healthcare centers.

About half of the study participants displayed a good level of awareness of LC symptoms. Further improvement in public awareness of LC symptoms by educational interventions might reduce LC mortality by promoting early diagnosis.