



CHAPTER 1
PREVENTION AND
EARLY DETECTION OF
BREAST CANCER

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The burden of breast cancer on our community is significant as breast cancer incidence in Hong Kong has doubled in the last two decade. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), a part of the World Health Organization (WHO), estimates that up to 30% of breast cancer cases could be avoided if women ate healthier and exercised more as a result of lifestyle modifications.¹¹

In this Chapter, we summarise the data from self-administered questionnaires in which 2,330 patients provided information about their lifestyle, health background and breast screening habits. The factual figures provide some clues as to how the patient cohort (group) tended to behave in their lifestyles and how these patterns differed from the norms.

Key findings

I. Risk factors for breast cancer

- 3% did not bear any risk factors at the time of diagnosis
- Over 85% did not have breast cancer in their families
- The most common risk factors are:
 - ▶ 70.8% lack of exercise
 - ▶ 53.5% no breast feeding
 - ▶ 34.4% being overweight or obese

II. Breast examination habits at the time of diagnosis

- 15.9% performed regular breast self-examination
- 25.9% performed regular clinical breast examination
- 11.2 % performed regular mammographic screening
- 9.2% performed regular breast ultrasound screening
- Habits of regular breast examinations are associated with age and education level