

PREVALENCE OF GYNAECOLOGICAL DISEASES IN NNEWI, NIGERIA

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INTRODUCTION

Gynaecological diseases and their complications have caused young girls and adult females to visit gynaecologists in various hospitals. These conditions if not properly managed will give rise to increased female morbidity and mortality in Nigeria and the world at large. Also these gynaecological conditions are inevitable in the face of increasing sexual consciousness and the desire for children. A lot has been written about the prevalence of these conditions with infertility as the commonest condition in most African counties¹. However, there is no report in Nnewi on the prevalence of gynaecological diseases hence this study.

METHODOLOGY:

This is a 5 year retrospective study of the gynaecological diseases seen in the gynaecological outpatient clinic of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Teaching Hospital, Nnewi in Anambra State of Nigeria from January 1998 to December 2002. Clinical diagnosis arrived at after history, examination and investigation as recorded in the case

notes were extracted and compiled for the period under study. This study is based on the outpatient consultations in the gynecological clinic, therefore gynecological emergencies seen in the accident and emergency unit of the hospital were not considered. The findings were subjected to statistical analysis using simple percentages.

RESULTS:

A total 1052 cases were reviewed in the 5-year period of this study. As shown in the table, of the 17 gynaecological conditions seen, Infertility with prevalence of 441(41.9%) is the commonest indication for gynaecological consultation in Nnewi. This is followed by uterine fibroid with prevalence of 206 (19.58%). The third is pelvic inflammatory disease with prevalence of 105 (9.98%). While utero-vaginal prolapse (7.41%), amenorrhoea (5.51%), and dysfunctional uterine bleeding (4.09%) are fourth, fifth and sixth respectively. Carcinoma of the cervix (2.38%) is seventh and the commonest malignancy seen.

Table. Yearly prevalence of the gynaecological diseases.

S/N	Diagnosis	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	Total	%
1.	Infertility	54	74	92	97	124	441	41.90
2.	Uterine fibroid	18	22	33	89	44	206	19.58
3.	Pelvic Inflammatory disease	10	11	26	27	31	105	9.98
4.	Utero-vaginal prolapse	12	11	9	30	16	78	7.41
5.	Amenorrhoea	2	6	16	23	11	58	5.51
6.	DUB	4	12	14	18	5	43	4.09
7.	Carcinoma of the cervix	4	5	7	4	5	25	2.38
8.	Vesico-vaginal fistula	3	2	5	8	2	20	1.90
9.	Uterine synechia	6	1	1	5	7	20	1.90
10.	Carcinoma of the Ovary	1	-	1	3	5	10	0.95
11.	Menopausal symptoms	-	3	1	3	1	8	0.76
12.	Ovarian Cyst	1	3	-	1	2	7	0.67
13.	Dysmenorrhoea	-	1	1	1	4	7	0.67
14.	Vaginal Candidiasis	-	1	-	4	1	6	0.57
15.	Missing IUCD	2	2	-	1	1	6	0.57
16.	Endometritis	2	1	1	2	-	6	0.57
17.	Batholin's abscess	-	-	4	1	1	6	0.57
Total		119	155	211	307	260	1052	100

DUB – Dysfunctional Uterine Bleeding. IUCD – Intrauterine Contraceptive Device.

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DISCUSSION:

Infertility was found to have the highest prevalence of 41.9% i.e. 2 out of every 5 gynaecological cases seen and this corresponds with the findings of other workers in Nigeria¹. There is a demonstrable yearly increase in the prevalence. This is not unconnected with the fact that the marriage in the African setting is primarily for child bearing. Therefore, couples seek medical attention as soon as they fail to conceive after the first year of marriage. A study on infertility in South-Eastern Nigeria² showed a higher prevalence of male factors (42%) than female factors (25%) as opposed to the 30-40% equality in male and female causes of infertility reported about two decades ago^{1,3}.

Uterine fibroid with a prevalence of 19.58% (one out of five) is the second commonest condition. This is a benign tumor of the uterus and the commonest benign tumor in the female. According to a study, over 80% of women above the age of 25 years have fibroid³. The high prevalence may be due to delay in child birth and improved diagnosis with ultrasound which is commonly available now unlike in the past decade. Most cases are diagnosed during ultrasound scan for other conditions especially infertility.

The third commonest condition is pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) with a prevalence of 9.98% (one out of ten). Abortion was clearly absent from the list of diseases seen in the gynaecology clinic because, in this hospital, such cases are seen as gynaecological emergency in the accident and emergency unit for immediate care.

Malignancies had a total prevalence of 3.50% out of which carcinoma of the cervix accounted for

2.38% and carcinoma of the ovary 0.95%.

Carcinoma of the cervix is therefore the commonest malignancy of the female genital tract in this study. This is similar to other studies in Nigeria^{1,3}.

Vesico-vaginal fistulae have prevalence of 1.90% and this is mainly due to obstructed labour as well as iatrogenic causes.

In conclusion, the study has demonstrated that infertility is still the leading indication for gynaecological consultation by our women. Carcinoma of the cervix remains the leading malignancy of the female genital tract.

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