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COVID-19 pandemic impact on breast cancer epidemiology and control in a Brazilian small town

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Breast Cancer (BC) is the most frequent malignancy in women and its survival rate varies greatly among countries, being smaller in middle and low-income ones. This suggests that developing countries lack early screening programs, prevention, counseling and proper information. Thus, as a worldwide concern in public health, we aimed to monitor BC prevalence in Itumbiara, Goiás, Brazil in the period 2018-2020. The University Ethics Committee approved this work, which did not need informed consent, since we analyzed only medical records of patients attended at a local Support Center (NAPCI) without identifying or exposing patients' data. We also analyzed how COVID-19 pandemic influenced the search for diagnosis and treatment, aiming to promote monitoring, identifies risk factors and contributes to public health strategies and prevention campaigns in the region. In Brazil, INCA estimated female BC incidence as 29.7% for each year of the triad 2020-2022, also suggesting a high mortality index, consequence of late detection in advanced stages. For the Mid-West region, INCA estimated 51 cases for each 100 thousand inhabitants. In Itumbiara, the more prevalent average group was 40-59 years old (61.2%), followed by 60-79 groups (21.2%). Regarding histological types with malignant presentation, there were 56 (62.2%) cases of Invasive Ductal Carcinoma (IDC), followed by 8 (8.9%) "in situ" ductal carcinomas (ISDC), most of all in advanced stages. These data are in agreement with national literature (INCA). Risk factors noted in the medical records were female gender (96/97), age, obesity, hormone consumption as estrogen or oral contraceptives, family history and mutations in BRCA1/2 genes. Thus, we reinforce the importance of epidemiological knowledge to apply preventive measures and early diagnosis, also because 80% of BC diagnoses in Brazil occur in advanced stages. In 2020/2021, COVID-19 pandemic was an aggravating factor, more severe in elder patients and with comorbidities such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and cancer, increasing their mortality risk.

Biography

João Paulo Martins do Carmo, PhD, is currently working as a Professor and Researcher at the Universidade Estadual de Goiás (UEG – State University of Goiás), Uniy Itumbiara, Brazil, since 2016. He received his Masters in Pathology from the Medicine School of the São Paulo State University (FMB-UNESP, Botucatu Campus). In 2008, he completed his Doctoral degree in Immunology at the University of São Paulo (USP, Brazil), spending a short period at the Charité University Medicine, Berlin (2007). He then worked at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), a branch of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, MD, USA, as a Visiting Fellow, awarded by the NIH Intramural Program (2009-2012). He serves as a member of the Brazilian Society for Science Progress (SBPC) and the Brazilian Society of Immunology (SBI), which is affiliated to the International Union of Immunological Societies (IUIS). He translated the book "Your Amazing Immune System—How It Protects Your Body", to the Brazilian Portuguese Language, sponsored by EFIS and JSI (2012-2019). He was honored with grants by AAI (2011 and 2015), and ASM (2006). He published 3 papers in 2022, related to vaccine coverage and cancer epidemiology with other 2 papers submitted in these areas. He has supervised over 50 students among bachelor, undergrad and postgraduate degrees in the health area courses, mainly in nursing, medicine, pharmacy and odontology schools. His current topics of research range from molecular biology, infectious diseases, vaccines, cancer (including breast and cervical cancer) and epidemiology.

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