



Pink Fighters

Breast Cancer Stigma and Taboo

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Abstract

Stigma and taboo are taking over breast cancer. They are changing the way people think about this disease. We are doing this research today to prove to people that what they are thinking is wrong. They need to **change their mind set about breast cancer.** To complete our research we have used breastcancerhub.org, pubmed.com, mayoclinic.org, and many more. You can refer to the references for more. **We have to spread the word about what stigma and taboo is doing to our world.** They are not letting women and men think about their body. In some countries people won't go to the doctor to get a check-up for their breasts. **If we don't start telling people to pay more attention to their body, then who knows how many more people will die? Let's start by telling a few people you know about what you learned today in breast cancer, and then tell them to do the same. Like this the chain will keep going and soon everyone will know about the damage that is happening to our world.**

What is Breast Cancer?

Breast cancer is when cells in the breast go out of control, the cells usually form a tumor. The tumor is basically the cancer, if it spreads everywhere even in the tissues then that indicates that you have breast cancer. Worldwide, breast cancer is the most common disease for women. Breast cancer is spreading due to stigma, taboo, ignorance, and embarrassment. People are shy to just say the word breast or to talk about breast cancer. People in their society will start thinking they are cursed because they have some problems going on in their breasts, and will not interact with them in any way. Due to these problems most of the people are suffering and are not getting treated on time. More and more people are losing their lives. We have to spread the word to break the stigma and taboo. [1], [2], [3]

What is Stigma and Taboo?

Stigma is a mark of disgrace associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person. Taboo means prohibited or restricted by social custom. **We have to break the curse of stigma and taboo.** In many developing countries, due to stigma and taboo, women are not opening up if they have issues in the breast. **For example, in India - due to stigma some people in India won't even leave the house because they are afraid about what people will say to them after they have breast cancer and because of taboo in India people will know they have something wrong going on in their breasts but they won't say anything because they are ashamed to talk about it, let alone go to the doctor and have a check- up. And even if they do go to the doctor, some people won't accept that they have something going wrong in their body. We want to free our society of stigma and taboo which is costing lives, if we don't fix it we don't know what could happen in the future. [1], [4]**

What is Embarrassment and Ignorance?

Embarrassment is a feeling of self-consciousness, shame, or awkwardness. Ignorance means lack of information or knowledge. **Our world is breaking under the weight of the embarrassment and ignorance of breast cancer. People are embarrassed to talk about breast cancer.** That's why most patients in developing countries especially in India, have gone to doctors in late stage. In many cases, women don't even know what breast cancer is. They have no idea about it because they weren't educated about it. We can't sit here doing nothing, knowing that people are risking their lives. **What we can do is educate woman about breast cancer in as many ways as possible. [1], [2]**

How is the Society Around us Changing because of Stigma, Taboo and Embarrassment?

A lot of people don't know about breast cancer and have to be more aware about it because it is the most common form of disease that affects woman. The society around us is changing because of people who keep their lives in danger so that is why we need to step up and stop this. In India, not many women understand the importance of breast cancer screening. Only half of these people agree that breast cancer could be cured if detected early and only 0.9% of the respondents had a breast examination by a health provider, only 1.3% had at least a gynecologic checkup in the past five years. **We need to spread awareness about breast cancer so that people don't lose their lives. [5]**

India

- In 2017 India had the highest mortality rate globally for breast cancer [6]
- Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women in India [6]
- In 2017, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Delhi had the highest rates for breast cancer [6]

USA

- 1 in 8 women get breast cancer in the USA (about 12%) [7]
- As of January 2019, there are more than 3.1 million women with a history of breast cancer in the U.S. This includes women currently being treated and women who have finished treatment [7]

Which Race is Getting Affected More by Breast Cancer?

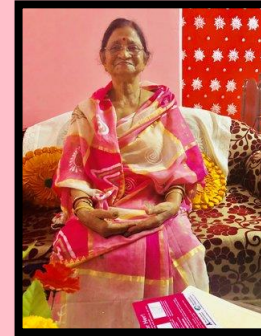
We all know that different races and ethnicity groups get affected more or less by breast cancer. We should know which race is getting affected more so we will know who to inform first. Young African-Americans, Hispanics, and people with BRCA1 mutation get affected more by triple negative breast cancer. About 1% of African-Americans suffer from BRCA1 mutation. In Asian-Americans less than 1% suffer from BRCA1 mutation, and in Hispanics 4% of them suffer from BRCA1 mutation. As you can see the **Hispanics are getting more affected by breast cancer than the other races. We don't know for sure what is causing this but we do know that it is mostly from lack of knowledge, stigma and taboo. [8], [9]**

These are the brave women from India who have survived breast cancer! We should all give them huge round of applauses for their bravery and how they have conquered this disease! Their inspirational stories will help encourage women & men across the world especially in the developing countries to break the taboo, come out of shyness, & speak up about Breast Health & Breast Cancer! Stories published on Breast Cancer Hub website [1]

Bina Baiyda



Panna Bharali



Bithika Nag



Nibedita Chakraborty



Mangla Iyer



Kalpana Choudhary



Manjit Kaur

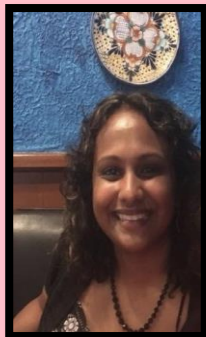


Titu Gupta

Hats off to these amazing women from US who have survived Breast cancer and have come forward to share their stories to help others... inspiration to the mankind- Our Heroes! Stories published on Breast Cancer Hub website [1]



Maura Maccarthy



Suanne (Sue) Jacob



Richa Khandelwal



Rose Reid



Sravani Sharma



Evey Cormican



Tripiti Borah



Christine Post

Conclusion

Stigma and taboo has been affecting India and other major countries. Stigma and taboo has been affecting people around the world and putting life in danger. We have to show the world how to break it and not be afraid of breast cancer. We can't leave people isolated when they have breast cancer because then they won't tell anyone about their condition and then they will suffer even more. If people won't open up about what they are going through then they will always feel the stress of stigma on them. We need to show to the people how we can change the world by opening up to people. We need to find solutions to these problems or else we are in trouble.

Pie Chart Link!!!

<https://www.meta-chart.com/share/which-countries-have-the-most-breast-cancer>



**Dr. Lopamudra Das Roy –
Our Hero, Our Idol, and Our Inspiration
Let's Live her Dream!**

Dr. Lopamudra Das Roy is inspiring the young generation to work for such a good cause. We should thank her for what she is doing and how many lives she is saving everyday. If each person contributes a small amount of their time towards breast cancer then they can stop the stigma and taboo flowing through breast cancer. We should all applaud to her greatness and her big heart. Without her we wouldn't be here today presenting this project. She is our hero, our idol, and our inspiration let's live her dream.

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- [3] <https://www.mayoclinic.org/>
- [4] <https://www.dictionary.com/>
- [5] https://academic.oup.com/annonc/article/23/suppl_3/66/207372
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