

## **DIETETIC, SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC AND BEHAVIOURAL RISK FACTORS OF OESOPHAGEAL SQUAMOUS CELL CARCINOMA: A CASE CONTROL STUDY**

P.V.R. KUMARASIRI<sup>1\*</sup>, S. WATTEGAMA<sup>2</sup>, N.I.A. PALLIYAGURU<sup>1</sup>,  
P.L.D.R.S. PANAGODA<sup>1</sup>, S.H. PATHIRATHNE<sup>1</sup>, A.P. PERERA<sup>1</sup>, L.S.J. PERERA<sup>1</sup>,  
T.A.C.L. PIYARATHNE<sup>1</sup>, W.A.P.N. PRASAD<sup>1</sup>, K. PRASANNA<sup>1</sup> AND  
G.G.S. PUSHPAKUMARA<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Peradeniya and* <sup>2</sup>*General Hospital, Kandy*

In Sri Lanka, carcinoma of the oesophagus is the fourth most common type of cancer in males, and the third most common type in females. The prognosis of this cancer is very poor. However, the epidemiological aspects of oesophageal carcinomas in Sri Lanka are so far not documented. Therefore, as the first step, this study proposes to establish the socioeconomic, behavioural and dietetic risk factors associated with oesophageal cancer, in a group of diagnosed patients seeking treatment at the General Hospital, Kandy.

This case control study was carried out over a period of two months beginning from 1 November 2001 and ending on 31 December 2001. Fifty patients, pathologically diagnosed as having oesophageal squamous cell carcinoma took part in this study. The control group consisted of 100 cases matched for age and sex. The participants were interviewed using a pre-coded questionnaire.

The results indicated that out of the chosen cases, 68% were females. The majority (48%) had their cancer located in the middle third of the oesophagus. Crude analysis identified that keeping of the betel tobacco quid inside the mouth and the number of lifetime beedi exposure as risk factors. Once the adjusted odds ratios were calculated, keeping the betel tobacco quid for more than 05 minutes was independently associated with the occurrence of esophageal cancers (adjusted OR = 4.56; (CI = 3.35 – 130.00). Alcohol consumption, cigarette and beedi smoking, ayurvedic drugs and some selected food items did not produce any significant associations.

The results of this study would have been affected by the small sample size, which was unavoidable due to the poor survival rate of the disease.