

37<sup>TH</sup> ASIA-PACIFIC

## NURSING AND MEDICARE SUMMIT

OCTOBER 20-21, 2017 OSAKA, JAPAN

**Behaviors for protection and exposure to endocrine disruptors (EDCs) in Korean adult women**SoMi Park<sup>1</sup> and Chae Weon Chung<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup>Yonsei University, Republic of Korea<sup>2</sup>Seoul National University, Republic of Korea

**Background & Purpose:** Endocrine Disruptors (EDCs) enter the body and interfere with normal functioning of the endocrine system. EDCs are associated with adverse effects on human reproductive health. Although over 80% of people in Korea know that EDCs are harmful chemicals, most Korea studies have focused on purchasing and consumption behaviors. The purpose of this study was to verify degrees of protection and exposure behaviors and to identify differences in those behaviors according to individual characteristics.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional survey was done with a convenience sample of 200 women from 3 community centers (2 urban and 1 rural). A self-administered questionnaire included questions on demographics and health related behaviors.

**Results:** Mean scores were 36.62 (17-68) for protection behaviors from EDCs and 45.65 (24-96) for exposure behaviors and there was a significant reverse correlation ( $r=-0.39$ ,  $p=0.001$ ). Analysis of differences in protection behaviors according to demographics showed the difference by age ( $F=3.95$ ,  $p=0.021$ ), so women in their 50s practiced more protection behaviors. In addition, housewives ( $t=2.01$ ,  $p=0.046$ ) and women residing in urban area ( $F=3.27$ ,  $p=0.040$ ) performed more protection behaviors than those counterparts. On the other hand, the exposure behaviors differed by the level of economic status of the women ( $F=3.39$ ,  $p=0.036$ ). Protection behaviors according to health-related characteristics showed that women and their family diagnosed with allergic diseases practiced significantly more protection behaviors ( $t=2.80$ ,  $p=0.006$ ) and less exposure behaviors ( $t=-2.23$ ,  $p=0.027$ ).

**Conclusion:** Women in higher economic groups use convenient disposable products which include a lot of environmental hormones. Individuals or families who experience allergic diseases tend to protect themselves and have less exposure to EDCs. The results suggest that environmental hormones are linked to health problems, signaling a need for education strategies that lead to health behaviors.

**Biography**

SoMi Park is a Professor in the Department of Nursing, Yonsei University, Wonju College of Medicine. He/She is also a Lecturer on Women's Health in the university. His/Her expertise is in the development of interventions for prevention and early detection of cancer in women in the community. He/She is also concerned about environmental health and how it relates to women's health.

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