Abstract: The Study of Factors Relevant to Skin Cancer Preventive Behavior in Female High School Students in Yazd Based on Protection Motivation Theory

Introduction: Skin cancer is the most prevalent type of cancer in Yazd, and childhood and adolescence are particularly important time for preventing later skin cancer risk. The goal of this study is to assess the factors relevant to skin cancer preventive behavior in female high school students in Yazd based on protection motivation theory. Skin cancer is one of the most preventable, curable and treatable of all other cancers. The rates for most cancers declined, but the skin cancers increased by 3 to 5% recently. Sun exposure is a major causative factor for skin cancer for which prevention is possible. Protection motivation theory (PMT) provides one model for increasing healthy behavior through persuasive communication.

Methods: Participants in this cross-sectional study were 360 female students from 4 high schools in Yazd. Data were gathered through a self-report questionnaire and were analyzed using SPSS, and statistical tests of ANOVA, T-test, Pearson correlation and regression.

Results: Pearson correlation coefficient showed that a significant positive correlation exists between behaviors and perceived susceptibility, perceived severity, fear, self-efficacy, response efficacy and coping-appraisal, and a significant negative correlation exists between behaviors and response cost, reward and perceived threat. (P)

Discussion: results support the effectiveness of a PMT-based intervention to change the attitude and behavior associated with skin cancer risk. Theory-based intervention can motivate people to alert their attitudes and behaviors regarding sun exposure.

Keywords: Skin cancer, Protection motivation theory, Students

Presentation: Oral