AGE SPECIFIC FREQUENCY OF COMMON BREAST CONDITIONS AMONG PATIENTS PRESENTING WITH BREAST LUMPS
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Background
The commonest presentation to breast clinics the world over is a woman complaining of a lump or lumpiness of the breast. A lump in the breast is a disturbing often traumatic experience for any woman and such a person will be looking for reassurance that their condition is not cancer. The 3 commonest causes for breast lumps are fibroadenoma, fibrocystic disease and carcinoma.

Objective
To compare the age specific frequency of fibroadenoma, fibrocystic disease and carcinoma among patients presenting with a lump to the Oncosurgical Unit Kandy.

Methodology
1261 patient records spanning over 4 years (2003 to 2007) were scrutinized. Patients with a definitive diagnosis of fibroadenoma (483 cases), fibrocystic disease (183 cases) and carcinoma (595 cases) were studied. The age specific frequency was calculated for each condition.

Results and Discussion
There were no patients below the age of 10 years with these conditions. It was observed that fibroadenoma peaked at the age range of 16 to 20 and steadily declined with age. In patients below the age of 30 years, 92.2% of the lumps were fibroadenomas. Fibrocystic disease was seen to be minimal below the age of 20 and peaked at the age range of 36 to 40, remained high till about the age of 60 and then reduced. Breast carcinoma was seen to be quite rare below the age of 30 and then increased rapidly.

Conclusions
Age specific frequency of breast lumps presenting to the unit follow a similar pattern seen in the West. The age at presentation may be considered a useful denominator in the diagnosis of breast lumps.

95