Awareness on balanced diet and eating practices among college students - A survey

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: A balanced diet is one that provides the body with all the essential nutrients, vitamins, and minerals required to maintain cells, tissues, and organs as well as to function correctly. A diet that is lacking in nutrients can lead to many different health problems ranging from tiredness and lack of energy to serious problems with the function of vital organs and lack of growth and development. The number of calories in a food is a measurement of the amount of energy stored in that food.

Materials and Methods: Questionnaire was prepared and survey was conducted among college students about balanced diet and eating practices, and data were collected. The survey was prepared on survey planet and was circulated among students. The survey was conducted among 110 students. Results: About 82.4% of the college students are already aware of balanced diet. Most of the college students say that their snacking is always junk and fast food, but still, they wanted to maintain a balanced diet to stay healthy. Hence, many students are aware of balanced diet and their eating practices. Conclusion: The survey was conducted among 110 students from that most of the college students are aware of balanced diet but still consume junk as their snack, which is about 59.6%, and have unhealthy eating practices. I think they should consult a nutritionist so that they would attain a balanced diet.

KEY WORDS: Balanced diet, College students, Eating practices, Nutrition

INTRODUCTION

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Your body uses calories from food for walking, thinking, breathing, and fatigue, and poor performance. Children with a poor diet run the risk of growth development problems and poor academic performance, and bad eating habits can persist for the rest of their lives. Dietary habits are the habitual decisions of individuals or group of people regarding what foods they eat. Proper dietary choices require the consumption of vitamins, minerals, carbohydrates, proteins, and fats.[⁴-⁷]

Milk products play a significant role in human health. An unhealthy diet is a major risk factor for a number of chronic diseases including pressure diabetics, abnormal blood lipids, overweight/obese, and cancer. There are two therapies, one is the dietary therapy to maintain a good and a healthy life and another one is medical nutritional therapy, and we have also traditional Chinese method.[⁸-¹¹]

In addition to dietary recommendations for the general population, there are many specific diets that have primarily been developed to promote better health in specific population groups. At the core of a balanced diet are foods that are low in unnecessary fats and sugars and high in vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients.[¹²]

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primarily been developed to promote better health in specific population groups such as people with high pressure blood (as in low sodium diets or the more specific DASH diet), or people who are overweight or obese (in weight control diets). However, some of them may have more or less evidence for beneficial effects in normal people as well.[13-15]

A balanced diet is one that provides an adequate intake of energy and nutrients for maintenance of the body and therefore good health. A diet can easily be adequate for normal bodily functioning yet may not be a balanced diet. An ideal human diet contains fat, protein, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals, water, and fiber all in correct proportions. These proportions vary for each individual because everyone has different metabolic rates and levels of activity.[9]

Malnutrition results from an unbalanced diet, this can be due to an excess of some dietary components and lack of other components, not just a complete lack of food. Too much of one component can be as much harm to the body as too little. Deficiency diseases occur when there is a lack of a specific nutrient, although some diet-related disorders are a result of eating in excess. An adequate diet provides sufficient energy for the performance of the body to function.[4]

Carbohydrates, fats, and proteins provide energy. Proteins are a provider of energy in an emergency but are primarily used as building blocks for growth and repair of many body tissues. We also need much smaller amounts of other nutrients such as vitamins and minerals. Despite the small quantities needed, these are essential to provide a healthy diet.[16-17] The aim of the study is to create awareness on balanced diet and eating practices among college students.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The sample size of this study is 110. The study group consists of students in the age group between 17 and 23 years. This was a questionnaire-based study. The survey questions were prepared and administered through survey planet using an online link. The questions basically analyzed on different aspects of their eating practices. Results were statistically analyzed.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The discussion covers various aspects of the student’s diet and their eating practices. The students who are aged between 17 and 23 years are very much aware about balanced diet [Figure 1], but still, they lack good eating practice. They consume more junk during their college break time (59.6%) [Figure 2]. Most of the participants lack a regular exercise [Figure 3].

Most of them have only two meals per day and intake of nutritional food is inadequate. Most of them prefer potatoes as their favorite vegetable, but potatoes contain high amount of carbohydrates and fats which unhealthy for an individual [Figure 4]. 33% of them eat chips rather than fruits and nuts.

39.4% of the participants suffer from headache. Most of the participants are stressed and have lack of confidence in their college life. It is evident fear that of facing difficulties in academics, extracurricular

**Figure 1:** Are you aware of balanced diet?

**Figure 2:** Do you exercise?

**Figure 3:** When you feel stressed, do you feel any of the symptoms?

**Figure 4:** What vegetable you like the most?
activities, and other college activities are more [Figure 5].

Principle of balanced diet article says that balanced diet and eating practices are different among students. This survey concludes that students have unhealthy balanced diet because of consumption of junk and their eating practices are poor.[18-20] From this survey, awareness on balanced diet and eating practices among college students was created.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this is to create awareness on balanced diet and eating practices among college students. Most of the college students are aware of balanced diet but still fail to attain. From this survey, awareness on balanced diet and eating practices among college students was created.

REFERENCES


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