

Weight reduction behaviours among obese young adults in Colombo district, Sri Lanka

Priyangika K.G.G.^{1*}, Wasalathanthri S.², Jayawardena R.² and Hettiarachchi P.³

¹*Department of Nursing & Midwifery, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Physiology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka*

³*Department of Physiology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Sri Jayawardenepura, Nugegoda, Sri Lanka*

Understanding weight reduction behaviours of obese young adults is helpful in planning weight reduction programmes. This descriptive cross-sectional study assessed the weight reduction behaviours of obese (BMI $\geq 25\text{kgm}^{-2}$) adults aged 18-35 years (N=261) attending a nutrition clinic of a teaching hospital in Colombo. An interviewer-administered questionnaire validated elsewhere (Iran) was used for data collection after face validation, and Chi-square test was used for comparisons. The majority (86.2% (n=225) has attempted weight reduction at least once. Only 33.8% (n=76) of them have sought professional advice of which all were abdominally obese and 67.1% (n=51) were above the mean age (27.9 years). Statistically significant associations were recorded between the tendency for seeking professional advice and presence of abdominal obesity ($p=0.003$), obesity class ($p<0.001$) and age ($p=0.003$). When weight reduction was considered, diet control alone was used by 39.8% (n=104), physical activities alone by 6.9% (n=18) and 33.3% (n=87) used both. Lack of motivation (60.9%) was the main reason for discontinuation of previous weight reduction attempts. However, only 41.8% used weight measurement to be aware of their weight. Further, 52.9% of the participants were skipped at least one meal per day and statistically significant associations were seen between meal skipping behaviour and age ($p<0.001$), gender ($p=0.011$) and educational status ($p=0.004$). Only 38.3% of participants have received information on weight reduction through health care professionals. The present study concludes that weight monitoring, participant motivation and involvement of health care professionals as deficient areas in the weight reduction of obese young adults.

Keywords: weight reduction behaviours, obesity and young adults

Acknowledgements: All the voluntary participants would be acknowledged

*Corresponding author: gpriyangil@gmail.com