

ABSTRACT

Introduction

Dietary management is an essential component in the management of type 2 diabetes mellitus. For successful dietary management, patients should have good dietary knowledge and high dietary adherence. But, diet barriers can prevent the patient from adhering to the recommendations.

Objectives

This study was conducted to assess the dietary knowledge, adherence and perceived diet barriers among patients with type 2 diabetes attending diabetic clinic at Base Hospital Galgamuwa.

Methods

A hospital based descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out in the diabetic clinic at Base Hospital Galgamuwa, to meet the above objectives. The study population included all the patients attending the diabetic clinic at Base Hospital Galgamuwa. A sample of 422 patients who attended the clinic during the months of February and March in 2021, was selected using systematic sampling method. An interviewer administered questionnaire with a scoring system was used for data collection regarding sociodemographic characteristics, dietary knowledge, adherence, perceived diet barriers and associated factors of the study population. Total scores were calculated for dietary knowledge, adherence and perceived diet barriers separately. Cutoff values were decided by a panel of experts. Based on cutoff values, dietary knowledge was categorized as 'Good', 'Average' and 'Poor'. Dietary adherence was categorized as 'High' and 'Low'. The level of diet barriers was categorized as 'High' and 'Low'. Statistical associations between independent and dependent variables were assessed using Odds Ratio and Chi square test.

Results

Majority of the participants (64.1 %, n = 263) had either ‘Average’ (39.8%, n = 163) or ‘Poor’ (24.3%, n = 100) dietary knowledge, while 35.9 % (n = 147) had ‘Good’ dietary knowledge. Majority of the participants (63.7 %, n = 261) had ‘Low’ dietary adherence, while 36.3% (n = 149) had ‘High’ dietary adherence. Majority of the participants (64.1%, n = 263) had ‘Low’ level of diet barriers and only 35.9% (n = 147) of them had ‘ High’ level of diet barriers. Age, gender, ethnicity, religion, education, occupation, income, living arrangement, age at onset, duration of diabetes, mode of treatment, complications of diabetes, family history, dietary knowledge and attitudes were significantly associated with perceived diet barriers ($p < .05$). High level of diet barriers were significantly associated with low dietary adherence (OR = 2.09, 95% CI = 1.34 – 3.26).

Conclusions

Only one third of the participants had good dietary knowledge. Dietary adherence was low in about two thirds of the participants. But, only one third of the participants had high level of diet barriers. Age, gender, ethnicity, religion, education, occupation, income, living arrangement, age at onset, duration of diabetes, mode of treatment, complications of diabetes, family history, dietary knowledge and attitudes were associated with perceived diet barriers

Recommendations

Dietary education given at clinic need to be improved. Perceived diet barriers of the patients need to be explored further through qualitative research. Further studies are recommended to explore the gaps between dietary adherence and level of diet barriers.

Key words: ‘Dietary knowledge’, ‘Adherence’, ‘Diet barriers’, ‘ Type 2 diabetes’