

Risk of Type 2 Diabetes among Female College Students in Saudi Arabia

Authors : Noor A. Hakim

Abstract : Several studies in the developed countries investigated the prevalence of diabetes and obesity among individuals from different socioeconomic levels and suggested lower rates among the higher socioeconomic groups. However, studies evaluating diabetes risk and prevalence of obesity among the population of middle- to high-income status in developing countries are limited. The aim of this study is to evaluate the risk of developing type-2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) and the weight status of female students in private universities in Jeddah City, Saudi Arabia. This is a cross-sectional study of 121 female students aged ≤ 25 years old was conducted; participants were recruited from two private universities. Diabetes risk was evaluated using the Finnish Diabetes Risk Score. Anthropometric measurements were assessed, and body-mass-index (BMI) was calculated. Diabetes risk scores indicated that 35.5% of the female students had a slightly elevated risk, and 10.8% had a moderate to high risk to develop T2DM. One-third of the females (29.7%) were overweight or obese. The majority of the normal weight and underweight groups were classified to have a low risk of diabetes, 22.2% of the overweight participants were classified to have moderate to high risk, and over half of the obese participants (55.5%) were classified to be at the moderate to high-risk category. Conclusions: Given that diabetes risk is alarming among the population in Saudi Arabia, healthcare providers should utilize a simple screening tool to identify high-risk individuals and initiate diabetes preventive strategies to prevent, or delay, the onset of T2DM and improve the quality of life.

Keywords : risk of type 2 diabetes, weight status, college students, socioeconomic status

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