

Anxiety and Change in Eating Habits and Health Behaviors among Adult Women during COVID-19 Pandemic Lockdown in Alexandria, Egypt

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Abstract : Background: COVID-19 pandemic is the major health problem facing the world recently, causing variable effects on mental health and eating behavior. Aim of the study: Identifying changes in eating patterns and other health behaviors in relation to the anxiety caused by the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown in adult females in Alexandria, Egypt. Method: 344 adult females (20+ years old), were included in online self-administered questionnaire. Results: Severe anxiety symptoms was among 34.6% of the studied females especially; those aged 25-40 years, married, non-working or student females, females who had change in their work routine (half or full time from home). Homemade pastries and bakery product then beverages followed by fresh fruits and vegetables were frequently consumed by the studied females than before lockdown while fast foods were decreased during lockdown. Overweight and obesity were high among most of the participants with different grades of anxiety symptoms. Females with moderate and severe anxiety symptoms reported increase in appetite and body weight with irregular sleeping during lockdown. Conclusion: the current study concluded that stressful situations like lockdown due to COVID-19 pandemic is associated with anxiety (severe, moderate, mild then minimal, respectively) along with changes in eating habits, physical activity, sleeping pattern and smoking.

Keywords : COVID-19, lockdown, females, anxiety, eating, stress, lifestyle

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