

## Food Intake Patterns in Omani University Students

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**Abstract :** Arabian Gulf region has undergone enormous development due to oil boom resulting in overwhelming changes in the lifestyle of the population over the past few decades. This study focused on food consumption patterns of Omani university students. Information, on anthropometric measurements, dietary intakes (measured by a food frequency questionnaire) of students was recorded. Anthropometric data revealed 62.5% of the subjects to be of normal weight and approximately 25% being overweight. Female students appeared to be more weight conscious than males. Dietary intakes in terms of servings (Mean  $\pm$  S.D) per day among normal weight (BMI 18.5 – 24.9) males vs. females were approximately; cereals ( $7.5 \pm 5.9$  vs.  $4.9 \pm 2.9$  servings), meat and alternatives ( $1.9 \pm 0.9$  vs.  $1.5 \pm 0.9$  servings), dairy foods ( $0.9 \pm 0.8$  vs.  $1.1 \pm 0.9$  servings) per day, respectively. Overall 55.3% of both males (average 1.9 servings) as well as females (average 1.7 servings) had severely inadequate intakes of vegetables on a daily basis as per the food guide pyramid recommendations. Only the fruit group intakes were adequate in about 70% of the population. Adequate intakes of dairy and meat and alternatives group were found in only 22% and 32% of the subjects, respectively. These results indicate a significant influence of a modern lifestyle on dietary habits and food selection of the target population.

**Keywords :** dietary pattern, food guide pyramid, lifestyle, Oman

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