

Prevalence of Overweight, Obesity, and Associated Lifestyle Behaviours among Female Nurses in Colombo South Teaching Hospital, Sri Lanka

GHJ Nisansala¹, SATP Siriwardana¹, BMDA Banneheka¹, BMKC Balasooriya¹,
KIDF Senanayake^{2#}, and KGPK Munidasa¹

¹Faculty of Health Sciences, The Open University of Sri Lanka, Nugegoda, Sri Lanka

²The Library, Faculty of Nursing, University of Colombo, Colombo, Sri Lanka

#fernandokid91@gmail.com

Abstract

Overweight and obesity are defined as abnormal or excessive body fat accumulation that may impair health. Being overweight and obese among nurses is an important issue as it can affect their health and professional capability which may directly impact healthcare quality and budget. A descriptive study was conducted at the Colombo South Teaching Hospital (CSTH) to identify the prevalence of overweight and obesity and the lifestyle behaviours related to overweight and obesity among female nurses. Two hundred and two female nurses have been recruited randomly respecting the inclusion and exclusion criteria. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data and analyzed with Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 22. The response rate was 80.8%. Majority (37.13%) were obese with a Body Mass Index (BMI) $\geq 25 \text{ kg m}^{-2}$ while 22.28% (BMI=23-24.9 kg m^{-2}) were overweight, 4.95% were underweight (BMI $< 18.5 \text{ kg m}^{-2}$). Only 35.64% of nurses were in the normal range (BMI=18.5-22.9 Kg/m^2) of Asian BMI classification. Most nurses (64.9%, n=131) take snacks two times per day and 74.3% (n=150) used to take a snack during the night shift. Sixty-three (31.2%) nurses used to skip their breakfast or dinner in stressful situations. More than half of the nurses (58.4%, n=118) never engaged in any type of exercise for years. The majority of nurses (23.8%, n=48) engaged in 24 hours of extra duty per week while 38.1% (n=77) engaged in one-night shift per week. Inadequate exercise, unhealthy snacks, extra work, fast foods and skipping meals were identified as unhealthy lifestyle behaviours related to overweight and obesity.

Keywords: *Prevalence, Overweight, Obesity, Lifestyle behaviors, Nurses*