

Physician's Nutritional Knowledge and their Attitudes Towards their Nutritional Education

Thesis

**Submitted for Partial Fulfillment of
M.Sc. Degree in Public Health**

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2013



Acknowledgment

*First of all, thanks **Allah** for all his great blessings and aid.
In the First place,*

*I would like to thank Professor **Dr/ Daa Marzouk Abd El –
Hamid** Professor at Community, Environmental, and Occupational
Medicine Department, Faculty of medicine, Ain Shams University
for her meticulous supervision, and her kind support. I greatly
appreciate her efforts to guide me to accomplish this work,*

*I'm also grateful to Professor **Dr/ Nanees Ahmed Ismaeil,**
Professor at Community, Environmental, and Occupational
Medicine Department, Faculty of medicine, Ain Shams University
who guided me a lot in this work by her close observation and her
great advices.*

*My special thanks to **Dr/ Sahar Khafiel Ibrahim,** Professor at
Community, Environmental, and Occupational Medicine Department,
Faculty of medicine, Ain Shams University for her continuous
supervision, encouragement and valuable directions, she was available
for helping me all over the course period.*

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List of Abbreviations

AAFP	the American academy of family physicians
ASPEN	the American Society for Parenteral and Enteral nutrition
CVD	cardio vascular disease
DM	Diabetes Mellitus
ENHA	the European Nutritional Health Alliance
ESPEN Metabolism	the European Society for Clinical Nutrition and
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GDP	the Gross Domestic Product
LOS	length of hospital stay
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOH	Ministry Of Health
NAS	national academy of science
NEAC	nutrition education and training in the country
NIM	nutrition in medicine
NNI	national nutritional institution
NRS	nutritional risk screening
ORN	oral nutritional supplementation
SENPE	the Spanish society for enteral and parenteral nutrition

Abstract

Background: Despite the increased emphasis on nutritional importance and diet-related diseases, nutrition education remains lacking in the training and educational programs. **Objectives:** to evaluate the attitudes, satisfaction, and knowledge related to nutrition among group of physicians in Mansura university hospital. **Methods:** Nutrition attitudes and satisfaction were measured using previously validated questionnaires. Knowledge was assessed with a multiple-choice quiz. Subjects were asked whether they had any recommendations **Results:** Of the 400 participants, 300 (75%) completed the survey. Although 75% had positive attitude towards the importance of nutrition in the medical practice, only 17% were satisfied and consider themselves adequately trained and educated to provide nutritional counseling, the knowledge level scored 55.6. Internist and younger physicians had more positive attitude than older physicians of other specialties $p < 0.05$. Pediatricians, female, and older physicians with post graduate studies scored higher in their knowledge $P < 0.01$ **Conclusions:** physicians perceive nutrition counseling as a priority, but lack the confidence and knowledge to effectively provide adequate nutrition education.

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Physician's Nutritional knowledge and Their Attitudes towards Their Nutritional Education

Abstract: **Background:** Despite the increased emphasis on nutritional importance and diet-related diseases, nutrition education remains lacking in the training and educational programs. **Objectives:** to evaluate the attitudes, satisfaction, and knowledge related to nutrition among group of physicians in Mansura university hospital. **Methods:** Nutrition attitudes and satisfaction were measured using previously validated questionnaires. Knowledge was assessed with a multiple-choice quiz. Subjects were asked whether they had any recommendations. **Results:** Of the 400 participants, 300 (75%) completed the survey. Although 75% had positive attitude towards the importance of nutrition in the medical practice, only 17% were satisfied and consider themselves adequately trained and educated to provide nutritional counseling, the knowledge level scored 55.6. Internist and younger physicians had more positive attitude than older physicians of other specialties $p < 0.05$. Pediatricians, female, and older physicians with post graduate studies scored higher in their knowledge $P < 0.01$. **Conclusions:** physicians perceive nutrition counseling as a priority, but lack the confidence and knowledge to effectively provide adequate nutrition education. **Recommendation:** Nutrition education should have more attention, Increase the enthusiasm of the physicians to counsel their patients regarding the sound nutrition, providing online courses to solve time problem.

Introduction

Nutrition is an integrated discipline focuses on the role of diet in the prevention and treatment of disease (**Schulman, 1999**). It is defined as the relation between diet, physical activity, health, disease, and the application of such knowledge for individuals (**Drexel University Nutrition Science Department 2011**). Diet contributes to 8 of the 10 leading cause of death in the United States, and now obesity has reached epidemic proportion in both adult and pediatric population. Although the precise mechanisms of many diet and disease relationships have yet to be determined, abroad consensus of evidence-based guidelines for disease prevention has been achieved (**Shikany et al., 2000, USDA, 2000, Al-Madani, 2004**).

Most people know about the importance of nutrition and how it affects their lifestyle so they regard their physicians as the primary providers of the nutritional information (**Hu, 1997**). Physicians play the major role in helping people with nutritional concerns. For this, there is an urgent need for physicians to be adequately informed about nutritional issue (**Endevelt, 2009**), and they have to know that nutrition is a strong factor in the function of health promotion, treatment of chronic diseases and prevention of diseases (**Schaller et al., 2005**). Nutrition is the most controllable risk factor affecting

long term health (**Warber et al, 2000**). The every day practice can evidence the importance of diet control in medicine as in coronary heart disease, atherosclerosis, non insulin dependent diabetes mellitus, osteoporosis and some types of cancer (**Turrell 1997**). Studies by *AL-Zahrani et al., 2009*, *AL-Eisa et al., 2005*, and *Al-Numair et al., 2004* showed that the nutritional knowledge of the physicians is inadequate. The lack of nutrition knowledge seems to be a factor why physicians are ignoring nutrition as a key treatment in the management of the health of their patients (**Ahmadi et al., 2009**).

The knowledge of the physicians is a basic factor in the health care system, thus they need an advanced knowledge of nutrition and high level of skills to deal with the majority of health care problems, and to address the nutritional problems in the global terms (**Norman 1999**). The gap in the nutritional knowledge of the physicians will negatively influence the effective health care (**LFA, 2010**), as they are influential in educating patients to change their dietary habits in order to improve their patient's health. In 1998's, surveys completed by physicians in Florida and Missouri indicated that physicians seriously underestimated the role of diet in the causation of cancer (**Starfield 2005**), Surveys have also showed that there has been a decline in physician knowledge about nutrition.

At 1988 a survey on the physicians in California reported a correct response rate of 69.2% for nutrition knowledge, while in 1995; physician in Texas scored 50.7% on the same survey **(Norman, 1999)**.

There are many reasons for nutrition education to be a part of the curriculum in medical universities. Early intervention through nutrition education may have enormous impact in disease prevention. Since disease treatment is very expensive, prevention of the disease are most likely to be the best option. Physicians at least must have the basic knowledge of nutrition and some more detailed information according to their specialty. Early intervention also decreases the cost of patients' referral to dieticians. But when it comes to special treatment's needs, physicians should refer their patients to nutritionists **(Allan, 2003)**.

Nutrition education of the physicians has been formally defined in several ways. One such definition says that it is a *"Planned effort to improve **nutritional knowledge of the physicians thus improving the nutritional status of the population by promoting modifications in their behaviors.**"*

Although USA has 128 schools offer nutritional courses either selective or obligatory, at 1994 (NAC) the national US academy of science announced that nutritional education in medical school was still inadequate.

In Egypt doctors have traditionally received little if any nutrition training during their medical education, residency training, or time in actual practice .Nutrition education is just some scattered information included as a part of other subjects, that's why we need to have some researches investigating how deep is the problem, what is the doctor's attitude towards this issue and why they didn't use nutritional instructions with their patients, and to measure if they are satisfied with their nutritional education during their medical years?

Aim of the Work

- 1- To describe the attitude of the physicians at Mansura university hospital towards the role of nutrition in patient care and towards adding more nutritional topics into the medical curriculum.
- 2- To measure the physicians' nutritional knowledge in different departments at the Mansura university hospital.
- 3- To assess the self-satisfaction of the medical staff at Mansura university hospital about their nutritional knowledge.

Review of literature

- **Importance of nutrition**

Nutrition is a strong factor in the function of health promotion, treatment of chronic diseases, and prevention of many types of diseases (**Schaller, 2005**). A study done in England revealed that diet and life style are considered to be the most controllable risk factor affecting long-term health being the key for prevention and treatment of many leading causes of disease burden and death world wide including cardiovascular such as coronary heart disease, atherosclerosis, cerebrovascular diseases, diabetes mellitus and some types of cancer (**Turrell, 1997**). Nutrition is responsible for 20% of disease burden as a risk factor in the developed countries (**WHO report at 2003**).

A well- documented obesity and overweight epidemic, and some nutritional issue such as underweight and micronutrient deficiencies are estimated to affect greater than half of the child death worldwide (**Ogden, 2007**).

Elderly are also affected by nutritional problems, it is documented that inadequate intake affects approximately 37% to 40% of the community-dwelling individuals over 65 years of age (**Ryan, 1992**). The vast majority of elderly have chronic conditions in which nutritional interventions have been demonstrated to be effective in improving the health and quality