

What risky behaviour is prevalent among pharmacy students at the University of Lagos

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Conflictos de interés: Los autores declaran no tener conflictos de interés alguno.

Abstract

Background: Risky behaviors can take years off a person's life and endanger those around that person. Effective health promotion actions on healthy eating, physical activity and tobacco control will make the most important contributions to reducing the burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in the global population (IUHPE, 2011). A significant proportion of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and cancer would be prevented if the major common risk factors (tobacco, physical inactivity, unhealthy diet) were eliminated. This would save many millions of premature deaths. Pharmacy students are part of the future workforce of health promotion specialists, hence the need to determine their risky behaviors, if any. **Purpose:** The objective of this study was to assess the risky health behavior of pharmacy students of University of Lagos in the area of tobacco, physical activity and eating habits.

Study/Intervention Design: Cross-sectional and descriptive

Methods: The study was a descriptive cross-sectional survey. Self-administered questionnaires were used to assess the health behaviors of 445 students. The questionnaire was adapted from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS). Analysis of data obtained was done using SPSS 20.0 version. **Results:** The majority were females (68%), Christians (81%) and 95% were between the age of 16-25 years. More than half (58.4%) drank fruit juice while 72% ate fruits or vegetables in the past 7 days as at the time of the study. Only about 13% had not consumed soda in the past 7 days. About 25.3% of the respondents had not been physically active for 60 minutes in the past 7 days and almost 70% did not participate in push-ups. Over 80% had not participated in team sport in the past 12 months. The majority of them (83.1%) have never smoked cigarettes daily and 96.4% have never tried using marijuana. Only 2% had ever smoked in the last 30 days.

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Conclusion: High risk behavior is not common among pharmacy students of University of Lagos, hence they are most likely to contribute positively to health promotion in future and may not add to the burden of NCDs. However there is need for them to reduce soda intake and be involved more in team sport and push-ups.