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Diet practices among patients with ischemic heart disease attending cardiology clinic at Teaching hospital, Jaffna, Sri Lanka

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Background: In Sri Lanka, Ischemic Heart Disease (IHD) was responsible for 14.2% of hospital deaths in 2017. Good practices related to diet can prevent further progression of disease and increase the life expectancy of patients with IHD.

Objective: To evaluate the dietary practices among IHD patients attending the cardiology clinic at Teaching hospital, Jaffna.

Method: A descriptive cross sectional study was conducted in 2019. Ethical approval was obtained from Ethics Review Committee, Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna. Nearly 414 participants were selected by systematic random sampling. A questionnaire was developed with the help of supervisors and relevant literature review. Data was collected with the help of trained three batch-mates and an interviewer-administered questionnaire was used. Data was analysed using SPSS 25.0 and Chi square test was performed to find the relationship between practice and consumption of selected food items after diagnosis of disease.

Results: Among 414 participants most were males (70.3%) with a mean age of 66.2 years. Most participants had reduced intake of oil (82.9%), salt (75.3%), and milk and milk products (55.8%) in their diet after diagnosis of IHD. More than one third had taken vegetables (53.9%) and fruits (40.8%) daily, whereas legumes were taken for 1-2 days per week (42.3%), and fish was taken for 3-4 days per week (35.7%). Participants had used coconut oil (27.3%), vegetable oil (19.8%), gingelly oil (19.6%) and sunflower oil (12.3%) for cooking. However, 21% of the participants had not used oil for cooking. Half of the participants had rarely taken bakery products (1-2 days per week). Gender showed a significant relationship with salt intake ($p=0.03$), oil intake ($p=0.03$), and consumption of vegetables ($p<0.01$) after diagnosis of IHD.

Conclusion: Most participants had reduced intake of oil (82.9%), salt (75.3%), and milk and milk products (55.8%) in their diet after diagnosis of IHD.