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Comparison of awareness of risk factors for coronary artery disease in medical and non-medical students of Karachi

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Aim: To compare awareness of CAD and its risk factors between medical and non-medical college students and to determine the prevalence of modifiable risk factors for CAD in both groups of students.

Methods: A sample of 311 medical and 320 non-medical students was taken from 4 universities (2 medical and 2 non-medicals) of Karachi, Pakistan. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect the data regarding awareness and practices of smoking, obesity, physical activity and hypertension. Using SPSS version 22 descriptive analysis was done to calculate the overall prevalence of the sample. Chi squared test and Independent t-test were used to compare categorical and continuous variables, respectively. P-value ≤ 0.05 was considered as significant.

Results: Out of the 311 medical students interviewed, 121(38.9%) were male and 190(61.1%) were female. 267(85.9%) medical students turned out to be overall aware as opposed to 200(62.5%) non-medical students. 98(30.6%) non-medical students were modifying lifestyles against CAD as opposed to only 89(28.6%) medical students. Amongst medical students chi squared test of significance showed an insignificant association between awareness and modifying lifestyle (p value >0.05). Amongst non-medical students we found a statistically significant relationship between awareness and modifying lifestyle (p value <0.05).

Conclusion: The results of our study showed that medical students had higher awareness than non-medical students in terms of the risk factors leading up to the development of CAD. In contrast to medical students, non-medical students who were aware of the risk factors of CAD were significantly more likely to modify their lifestyles and to avoid practices leading up to the development of CAD.

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