

SJSM Science

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SJSM students are committed to improving the health of the Caribbean people and beyond through education, research and service and keeping in mind the diversity and the specificities of the population. The results of their activities were presented on The Caribbean Public Health Agency conference. Please take a look.



Health Awareness as a predictor of Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases in St. Vincent and the Grenadines

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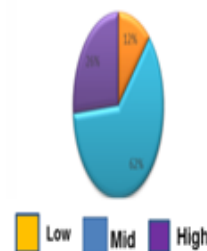


Objective: This study was initiated to evaluate the effect of health awareness on health values such as dietary structure and choices. To evaluate the effect of health awareness levels on the presence of Chronic Noncommunicable Diseases in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Design and Methods: Cross-sectional Survey. A community-based proportional sample of adults residing in the Georgetown and Leeward areas of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines were considered. A 20 item survey instrument was used to gather data on demographics, socioeconomic status, dietary structure and health awareness.

Results: Participants with high awareness level have higher educational levels and lower incidences of non-communicable diseases than individuals with low awareness levels. Chi square test gave a p value less than 0.00001 for the association between awareness level and disease. The relationship between awareness level and education, yielded a p value of 0.000088.

Distribution of population based on awareness level



Factors Preventing a Balance Diet



Pie charts indicate that 59% quote insufficient time for a balanced diet while 15% of the population sample in St. Vincent and Grenadines lack knowledge about the outcome of an unbalanced diet. The mid-to-low awareness levels on the island stands at an alarming 62% while only 12% are actually aware to know the importance of a balanced diet.

Discussion and conclusions: Health awareness is linked to chronic non-communicable diseases such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, diabetes and stroke. There is no significant difference in health awareness levels between gender and age. However, there is a positive correlation between higher awareness and higher education levels, this difference is shown with a p value of 0.000088. Also it was discovered that higher health aware individuals participate in health-center behaviors. There was no significant difference in factors that affect the purchase of foods amongst all awareness groups. Cost and brand were identified as the most significant factor in the purchasing food. Calories and nutritional facts seem to have lower influences on food purchase.