

COST OF HEALTHY EATING AS IT PERTAINS TO DIABETES

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2008

Background: Brought from countries such as Africa and India with the formation of the slave trade and indentureship was how the Caribbean islands got most of their population that is known today. The forefathers of the Caribbean population made their journeys with memories of home country and a very important aspect that will have a great impact on their lives in that era and centuries after

Objective: This study evaluated whether *the cost of healthy eating is prohibitive to persons with diabetes mellitus in obtaining a have a healthy diet*

Methods: Participants were enrolled from medical institutions such as the Sangre Grande Hospital and the Eric Williams Medical Complex where they attended clinics for their chronic diseases. Upon consent to participate in the research, a questionnaire consisting of socio-demographic variables was administered then a 24 hour recall was taken. When this was done the anthropometric measurements were taken.

The analysis of data collected was done in two phases. First the 24 hour recalls were individually analyzed using NutriGenie Optimal Nutrition 7.5. results of which were then entered along with answers of the questionnaires and

anthropometric measurements into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS for windows release 11.0).

Results: There were 31 males and 29 female diabetics participated in the study. Calculations of diet cost from the 24-hr recall show that the average cost of daily diets was approximately TT\$30.96 per day. Similar computations showed that the average cost of eating healthily was TT\$57.00 per day. Thus they will need to spend TT\$26.04 per day, approximately an additional \$840.00 per month to meet the cost of eating healthily.

Conclusions: From results obtained from research it can be concluded that for people obtaining an average household income of TT\$4417.94 (**20**) it is a financial burden on them to purchase foods such and fresh fruits and vegetables for their consumption and proper management of their diabetes. While some participants did not have any dependants the justification for their dietary patterns can be that they are not properly informed of the disease that they have or they are not capable of making healthy food choices. Singularly or combined it can be concluded that the cost of healthy foods pose a direct problem to the quality of dietary intake of diabetics.