

# **AN INVESTIGATION OF THE NUTRITIONAL STATUS AND EATING HABITS OF WOMEN WITH POLYCYSTIC OVARIAN SYNDROME IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

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**Background** According to the revised Rotterdam's consensus of 2003 Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS) occurs in 5-10% of women of childbearing age and is characterized by hyperandrogenism, evidence of polycystic ovaries via ultrasound and or oligoanovulation (workshop 2003).

**Objective** To investigate if there is any relationship between the dietary habits of women with Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS) and the progression of their diagnosis.

**Design** A Cross-sectional study carried out on PCOS women in Trinidad and Tobago. Sixty women diagnosed with PCOS of childbearing age were identified between Trinidad and Tobago. A 3-Day food record and questionnaire were used to investigate the dietary habits and nutritional status of the respondents.

**Results** Out of the 60 women identified, 44 completed the 3-Day food record and questionnaire. The following has been observed among the PCOS women in this study: majority of the subjects had a disordered eating pattern, were in the obese category, android, got their information about PCOS from their doctor and or internet, defined PCOS as cysts on ovaries but no in-depth information on the syndrome, treated PCOS with Metformin, largest food group on their plate was staples, did not exercise, ate breakfast late, skipped meals, had a low daily water consumption, consumed high fat, high sugar and dairy on a regular basis.

**Conclusion** This study unearthed some interesting findings about the dietary habits of PCOS women. The findings support the hypotheses, that women diagnosed with PCOS have late breakfasts and skip meals regularly, consume small amounts of water on a daily basis: preferring sweetened beverages. However, there is no strong correlation to, as stress increases, sleep time decreases Body Mass Index (BMI) increases and as BMI increases symptoms of PCOS increases.