Lifestyle Behaviors and Cardio-metabolic Risk among Police Officers in Trinidad and Tobago

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Background: Law enforcement is associated with increased levels of stress that are associated with unhealthy lifestyle behaviors.

Objectives: In this study, we evaluated cardio-metabolic risk and associated lifestyle behaviors among police officers.

Design: Participants completed self-administered questionnaire consisting of socio-demographic, dietary and physical activity items. Following this blood pressure and anthropometry were measured using standard procedures. Both written and oral consent was obtained prior to enrolment. Participation in the study was voluntary.

Results: Four hundred (Females 188 and Males 262) officers participated in the study. There were no significant differences in age, ethnicity, education level, and marital status between male and female participants. Males were more likely than females to have an elevated systolic blood pressure (SBP > 130 mmHg) (47.7% vs. 31.2%, $p = 0.01$) and body mass index (BMI > 30) (21.4% vs. 16.5%). BMI and SBP were significantly associated with dietary behaviors and physical activity among participants. In partial correlation analyses controlling for age, ethnicity, education level, marital status, BMI was inversely associated with the frequency of consumption of vegetables ($p<0.001$) and peas and beans ($p = 0.003$) and positively associated with the frequency of consumption of sodas ($p = 0.001$) and cigarette smoking ($p = 0.001$). Average SBP was positively associated with the frequency of cigarette smoking ($p < 0.001$) as well as the consumption of red meats ($p = 0.03$), fast foods (p,=0.003), and sodas ($p <0.001$ after adjusting for age, ethnicity, education level, marital status and BMI.

Conclusion: My results indicate that high levels of cardio-metabolic risk that is associated with unhealthy lifestyle practices among participants.