

A Population Study of the Self-care Behaviors and their Associated Factors of Diabetes in Taiwan: Results From the 2001 National Health Interview Survey in Taiwan (Preventive Medicine, 2005)

Background: Diabetes has been the fifth leading cause of death in Taiwan since 1987 and the complications are a burden to the patients, their families and society.

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to examine the self-control behaviors of the diabetics and associated factors.

Methods: Data for this study came from the 2001 National Health Interview Survey in Taiwan. Subjects with diabetes confirmed by medical professionals, aged 40 years or older were included. Self-care behaviors included any of the following: taking medicine regularly, reducing weight, avoiding cigarettes or alcohol, exercising, practicing diet control, and maintaining a regular life style and avoiding late hours. The factors considered were demographic factors including age, sex, education, income, and health behavior factors including smoking, drinking alcohol, chewing betel nuts, and health conditions such as existence of other chronic diseases, limitation of ADL, and self-perceived health.

Results: There were 764 subjects who aged 40 years or older who were diagnosed with diabetes. Logistic regression showed that females, those with older age or chronic disease, such as hypertension or dyslipidemia, and with a long duration of diabetes took medicine regularly. Old age group, middle school educated, and longer duration of the disease had higher chance of using any self-care method than their counterparts.

Conclusion: Attention should be given to younger age group, shorter duration of the disease in practicing self-care of diabetes.