

Dietary Practices of Men in Bangladesh: Evidence from the National Nutrition Surveillance

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Objectives: Bangladesh has a paucity of information about the dietary practices of adult men. In the recently completed round of the national nutrition surveillance (NNS 2018–2019), we explored the dietary practices of adult men and factors associated with insufficient dietary diversity (IDD) and insufficient intake of fruits and vegetables.

Methods: In the NNS, between October 2018 and 2019, we collected data from 82 clusters (57 rural, 15 non-slum urban, and 10 slums) selected using multistage cluster sampling. In these clusters we interviewed and took physical measurements of 4904 20–59 years old men (3471 in rural, 832 in urban, and 601 in slum). We used minimum dietary diversity for women (MDD-W) questionnaire to collect dietary data. IDD was defined as consumption of < 5 food groups out of 10

food groups, and insufficient fruits and vegetables intake was defined as consumption of < 5 servings of fruits and vegetables in the past 24 hours.

Results: The prevalence of IDD was 53% (54% in rural, 42% in non-slum urban, and 56% in slum areas) among the adult men. In the past 24 hours, 73% consumed meat/fish/poultry, 28% consumed eggs, and 22% consumed dairy products. The consumption of dark green leafy vegetables, vitamin A rich fruits and vegetables, other vegetables, other fruits was 34%, 22%, 73%, and 37%, respectively. Among the respondents, 27% had savory snacks, 52% had sweets, and 75% had sugary drinks. The prevalence of insufficient fruits and vegetables intake was 86% (83% in rural, 92% in non-slum urban and 93% in slum areas). IDD was associated with education (partial secondary education: Adjusted odds ratio (AOR) 0.67, $P < 0.001$; ≥ 10 years of schooling: AOR 0.48, $P < 0.001$), and sufficient intake of fruits and vegetables (AOR 0.82, $P = 0.022$). On the other hand, insufficient fruits and vegetables intake was associated with IDD (AOR 1.23, $P = 0.014$), hypertension (AOR 0.77, $P = 0.020$) and adequate physical activity (AOR 0.46, $P < 0.001$).

Conclusions: More than half of the men aged 20–59 years consume an inadequately diversified diet in Bangladesh and 86% had insufficient intake of fruits and vegetables. This study identified a number of factors associated with IDD, and insufficient intake of fruits and vegetables. The government of Bangladesh should address them while developing interventions to improve nutrition.

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