

**DIETARY HABITS AND NUTRITIONAL STATUS
OF THE ELDERLY IN INSEIN TOWNSHIP,
YANGON REGION**

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to assess the dietary habits and nutritional status of Elderly in Insein Township, Yangon Region. The study was cross-sectional descriptive study conducted among community dwelling elderly in five selected wards of Insein Township. Data were collected by using semi-structured interview questionnaires from October 3 to November 1, 2013. The study population consisted of 153 elderly persons aged 60 to 75 years including 98(64%) women and 55(36%) men. The highest percentage of population belonged to age group of 65-70years (39.9%).

Mini-nutritional Assessment Short form (MNA-SF) was used to assess the nutritional status of the elderly people in which anthropometric measurements of weights and heights or calf circumferences were also included. Among the studied elderly population, (54.2) % were well nourished, (7.2%) malnourished, and (38.6%) at risk of malnutrition according to MNA-SF. There was more malnutrition in female compared to male (9.2% versus 3.6%).

Among 153 elderly people, 143 were available for measurements of weight and height to calculate BMI. From those 143 elderly people, (44.76%) was within normal BMI range, (18.88%) was underweight, (26.6%) was overweight and (9.8%) was obese.

Dietary habits of the elderly people were asked by food frequency questionnaires. Although (66%) of the elderly people ate vegetable daily, only (24.8%) and (13.7%) of the elderly people consumed fruits and milk daily. About one-third (33.3%) of the elderly people were suffering from chewing difficulties either a little or severe. Health care providers need to be aware of this problem and its scope. These results reinforce the need to screen, monitor and support elderly people.

Age groups, main meal taken per day and chewing difficulties of the elderly people were not associated with their nutritional status. Sex and education status were associated with nutritional status of the elderly people.