

EATING PATTERN AND NUTRITIONAL STATUS OF THIRD YEAR MEDICAL STUDENTS,
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ABSTRACT

This study was a University based, cross sectional descriptive study, conducted to investigate the eating pattern and nutritional status among third year medical students at the University of Medicine (2), Yangon, in the 2016 academic year. After explaining the purpose of study and the nature of questionnaires, total 210 third year medical students over 18 years of age were selected voluntarily and randomly. The socio-demographic characteristics, prior nutritional knowledge and eating pattern including the food consumption pattern were collected by self-administered questionnaire form. Height and weight of students were collected **precisely** by using standardized machines of Sica brands. Then body mass index (BMI) was calculated by weight in kilogram divided by height in meter square. Body mass index was categorized into 4 groups; under-weight, normal, over-weight and obese. Although most of them have good nutritional knowledge, they were not fully practicing and applying their nutritional knowledge in their real lives. They were found to have less knowledge about serving units of fruits and vegetables. Eating pattern of students were asked including food consumption questionnaires. Most of them were missing their breakfast because of no enough time in the morning. Among the three main meals of a day, breakfast was mostly skipped meal. There was association between sex and skipping of meals especially in dinner because females skipped more dinner than males, for their dieting program. About one quarter of study population had no habit of consuming milk and dairy products. Only 9.5% of candidates met with the recommended daily serving size of fruits and vegetables. The nutritional status among both sexes show considerable differences. More than 64% of students were within normal BMI for age. Among the rest, 22.4% were under weight, 11% were overweight and 2.4% were obese. Female students were more concerned about their eating pattern and dietary control. Male students were found to be in unhealthier BMI than females. There was five obese students in male population but there was no obese female. Findings from this study indicate that appropriate up-to-date nutritional education is needed not only for the students but also for the shopkeepers from the canteens. Moreover, increase awareness about the recommended daily serving size for fruits and vegetables should be established among people. Adherence to healthy eating practices, especially regular eating of breakfast should be ensured among the students by enhancing more chances to get proper breakfast before they get into the morning teaching classes.