EVALUATION OF NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASE RISK FACTORS AMONG FILIPINO WOMEN OF REPRODUCTIVE AGE

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BACKGROUND

Women of reproductive age (WRA) have the potential to get pregnant and thus are in a crucial stage of the life cycle. For this reason, women need to be healthy to sustain and have healthy pregnancies and healthy babies. Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) that include heart disease/hypertension, chronic respiratory diseases, diabetes and most cancers are increasing, even in developing countries like the Philippines due to a combination of behavioral and physiologic factors.

OBJECTIVE

This study aimed to evaluate the prevalence and determinants of behavioral and physiologic non-communicable disease risk factors among Filipino WRA.

METHODOLOGY

This is a secondary, cross-sectional analysis of the 8th National Nutrition Survey involving 4,957 non-pregnant and non-lactating women aged 15-49 years. The variables investigated were behavioral NCD risk factors (smoking, alcohol consumption and physical inactivity) and physiologic risk factors (overweight/obesity, raised blood pressure, high fasting blood glucose and high total cholesterol). Descriptive, bivariate and multiple logistic regression analyses were employed using a 5% level of significance.

RESULTS

Determinants of current smoking, alcohol drinking, overweight/obesity and high total cholesterol included age, marital status, educational attainment and place of residence. Additional determinants of alcohol drinking included wealth status while food security was a determinant for overweight/obesity and high total cholesterol. Determinants of physical inactivity were age, educational attainment and work status. Raised blood pressure and high fasting blood glucose were significantly associated with age and educational attainment. An additional determinant of high fasting blood glucose was marital status.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The present study identified that being 20 years and older, being single or widowed/separated/divorced, those from urban areas, those with lower income and having lower education as determinants of behavioral and physiologic risk factors of NCDS among Filipino WRA. This provides initial evidence to support health and nutrition endeavors targeting this age group.