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Extended hygiene hypothesis: Can filariasis confer protection against diabetes?

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Disease dynamics is a complicated phenomenon where in some diseases fall sharply in their incidence to be slowly taken over by others. Recently, such a phenomenon is being documented in India and few other Asian countries. The sharp increase in the incidence of diabetes all throughout the world and especially Asian countries had led to many speculations. Our studies which aimed at looking at the association of filariasis and diabetes have given an inverse relationship between these two seemingly unrelated diseases. Filariasis is a worm infection which spreads through mosquito bites which was once very common in African and Asian countries. India especially, was long identified as a major endemic country for filariasis. However, due to several rounds of mass drug administration, filariasis has become a nightmare of the past. While it is truly a moment of triumph for the public health management, the war is not yet won but has been taken over by a mightier giant- the metabolic diseases. In the past decade, while the incidence of filariasis has steeply fallen, the incidence of diabetes has increased steadily, in India. Our studies clearly indicated that these two events were not due to chance co-incidence but were interlinked. Of course these findings have to be interpreted with caution; since filariasis by itself cannot be a panacea against all metabolic diseases since any such protective effect was not seen against coronary artery disease, a common form of cardiovascular diseases, which is the number one killer disease across the world.

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Knowledge, attitudes and practices and its association with glycemic control among type 2 diabetes mellitus patients in a tertiary hospital in Davao city

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Introduction: Patient education is the corner stone of diabetes care. This study was conducted to determine the Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) among patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus and find out whether these factors are associated with glycemic control or not.

Objectives: This cross-sectional analytic study aims to identify the demographic profile of the subjects and assess their level of Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) towards Diabetes Mellitus (DM). It also aims to determine the association between the patient's KAP and glycemic control of DM among patients in a diabetic clinic.

Methods: Type 2 DM patients were recruited using the convenient sampling method from a diabetes clinic. KAP was assessed using a KAP questionnaire which had 54-items and from which control of DM was evaluated from the most recent HbA1C levels.

Results: A total of 168 patients with T2DM participated in this study, and it was found that the level among patients following up in a managed diabetes center in a tertiary hospital is adequate in achieving 56%, 66% and 91% of Knowledge, Attitude and Practices respectively. A good KAP level was observed in majority of females, who are above 60 year old, overweight, high waist-to-hip ratio, unemployed, with family history of DM, less than 10 years with diabetes, those who attended DM classes, and without smoking history. However, these results were found not to be statistically significant except for the educational attainment for the knowledge domain and the unemployment status for the practice domain. It was found that there was a strong association between knowledge and attitude, but not with knowledge and practice ($P > 0.05$). No significant association was noted between good KAP and glycemic control and there could be other possible factors like socio-economic constraints and lack of resources to facilitate medication adherence must also be identified and addressed to achieve better disease control. Hence, this study emphasizes that providing patient education through diabetes classes and the presence of an integrated multidisciplinary team is important for enhancing patient KAP.

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