

# Assessment of Eating Habits among Undergraduates of Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Sri Lanka

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Eating habits are considered as a major determinant which affects both physical and psychological health. Young adults who experience transition to university life change their eating habits, and it may influence their physical and psychological health. The present study assesses the eating habits among the undergraduates of the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences at General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University. A descriptive cross sectional study was conducted among 238 undergraduates using a pre tested self-administered questionnaire for data collection. Systematic random sampling technique was used and data analysis was conducted using descriptive and inferential statistics. Majority of the study participants (63.2 %, 141) were residing away from family. Among the study participants, 74 % (177) were females and the rest were males (26 %, 61). Majority of the sample (77.7 %, 185) reported having regular meals. 72.3 % (172) of participants had skipped at least one meal during the previous week and 16% (38) reported having snacks instead of the main meal. Majority of the study subjects (93.7 %, 223) were reported consuming green and yellow coloured vegetables at least 1-2 times per week. Only 38.7 % (92) ate green and yellow colour vegetables daily whereas 11.8 % (28) had fruits daily. Nearly 91 % (217) of the participants stated that their eating habits were changed after the university entrance. Nearly 50 % of the participants (52.9 %, 126) were found to be having unhealthy eating habits. This study provides important baseline information regarding eating habits of university students.

Keywords: Eating habits, Allied health, Undergraduates