

Title: Dietary Changes and Related Health Problems Among Hispanic Immigrants in the Student Run C.A.R.E.S Clinic

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Objective: The purpose of this study was to determine dietary and lifestyle changes among Hispanic Immigrants (HI) in the U.S., and their association with adverse health events and access to food assistance services (FAS).

Methods and Instruments: Dietary changes were assessed using a questionnaire comparing intake of food groups in home countries vs. the U.S. Data was acquired over a period of 6 months from 57 Hispanic immigrants. Food groups and questions were used based on the USDA Recommended Dietary Guidelines. Food categories were grouped into healthy and unhealthy change categories. Dietary change scores were calculated by the (US diet – Home country diet) these were then turned into a nutrition change ratio (Unhealthy change/healthy change). Questions regarding usage of FAS and health markers were also included in the questionnaire. An ANCOVA was performed to identify dietary change, the contribution of length of stay in the US, social determinants of health and health access limitations.

Results: Data analysis shows intake of healthy foods decreases ($P=0.0026$) and intake of unhealthy foods increases ($P<0.0001$) after immigration to the U.S. Dietary changes were determined to contribute to disease burden on the study population (all $P<0.05$). 55.36% of patient sample lacks FAS and 52.96% have scant medical visits despite disease burdens.

Conclusions: Overall, the data shows that HI make poorer nutritional choices after immigration that contribute to disease burden. Nutrition counseling for HI should focus on reinforcing dietary habits from their home countries, provide food assistance resources, as well as teach nutrition label reading.

Conflict of interest: None.

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Table 1: Factors that contribute to the dietary change

Variable	P-value	Percent of contribution
Frequency of general medical visits	0.002	53.5%
Grocery store distance	0.001	57.1%
Length of US residency	0.006	60.3%
Country of origin	0.020	56.8%

Table 2: Dietary change score and its contribution to disease burden

Variable	P-value	Percent of contribution
Diabetes	0.0001	55.3%
Hypertension	0.10	41.4%
Heart disease	0.002	52.2%
Kidney disease	0.022	34.2%
Other diseases	.041	28.5

Figure 1: Changes in Healthy and Unhealthy food intake in Hispanic Immigrants

