

Baseline Assessment for a Multi-institutional Diabetes Prevention Program for First Nations

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Diabetes has reached epidemic proportions in First Nations but there is limited information on physical activity and food use behaviors and psychosocial factors that influence these behaviors. A baseline survey of main food preparers and shoppers (n=149 randomly selected household, remote n=76, semi-remote n=73s) on seven reserves was conducted to assess physical activity and food related behaviors and psychosocial factors using multi-question scales. Respondents on remote reserves were more likely to have less education (>12 years: 39.47% vs. 62.96%, p=0.008), come from larger households (mean household members: 4.28 vs. 3.77, p=0.107). Related to this, respondents on remote reserves had lower knowledge scores (on a 5 point scale: 2.92 vs. 3.56, p=0.022) for physical activity and food behaviors and lower outcome expectations for related behaviors (on a 5 point scale: mean 4.04 vs. 4.33, p=0.008). More than half of respondents were regularly purchasing items for which there were equally priced healthier alternatives, such as skim milk, whole wheat bread, and diet soda. This suggests that there is a need for education and support to help people adopt healthier behaviors. These baseline findings will also be used to evaluate a multi-institutional trial to prevent diabetes. This work was supported by the American Diabetes Association and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.