

International Conference on

Metabolic Syndromes

October 17-18, 2016 Rome, Italy

Effectiveness of a therapeutic educational program for type-2 diabetic patients on eating habits and metabolic control

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Statement of the Problem: Prevalence of diabetes is increasing worldwide with a known strong relation to obesity and eating habits. In face of this situation, for diagnosed people metabolic control is a major objective. Lifestyle approaches with a highlight on eating and exercise habits have proven to be an effective contribute to achieve this goal. In Portugal, reality where this study was conducted, 90% of the population with diabetes is overweight (49.2%) or has obesity (39.6%), (PREVADIAB 1). With this, comes an urgent need to identify effective interventions to reduce this burden. With this study we intend to analyze the impact of a lifestyle centered intervention on metabolic control and self-care activities of poorly controlled type-2 diabetic patients.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: To assess the effectiveness of the 24 weeks Program, a controlled before and after experimental study was conducted. Measures were taken before and after intervention program, including glycosylated hemoglobin (HbA1c), body mass index (BMI) and self-care activities (SCA) through the application of summary of diabetes self-care activities scale.

Findings: The comparison between pre and post-test in Control Group (CG), which received usual care and Experimental Group (EG) showed that only in EG was a statistically significant decrease in HbA1c and BMI. Adherence to SCA is higher in EG, having an estimated increase in 40% more than CG ($\eta^2=0.40$). Expected behaviors concerning eating habits, increased a mean of 2 days/week and physical activity 1 day/week in EG while in CG changes were lower (+0.6 days/week and +0.28 days/week, respectively).

Conclusion & Significance: The educational program designed was effective for people with type-2 diabetes with higher metabolic control and more frequent self-care behaviors for EG. With distinct effect sizes, EG participants reduced significantly HbA1c and BMI, while increased expected behaviors related to eating habits.

Biography

Maria do Rosario Pinto has her expertise in Medical Surgical Nursing. Her research has been on gender sociology (in MD context), therapeutic education (diabetic patients) and complex interventions effectiveness assessment. HIV, cancer and emergency and critical care in nursing are her major interests and has also lectured in these areas. She is the Coordinator for Internationalization of her Health School, participating in a TEMPUS project in which is doing research on VaKE strategy applied to nursing fields, participating in the conduction of several workshops on the theme (Portugal, Salzburg, Israel).

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