2009

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The Dietary Quality of Persons with Heart Failure in NHANES 1999-2006

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OBJECTIVE

- To describe the dietary quality and achievement of recommended dietary goals and assess correlates of goal achievement in a national sample of persons with heart failure.

RATIONALE

- Heart failure is associated with considerable morbidity and mortality.
- American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association (ACC/AHA) guidelines recommend the following dietary guidelines for persons with non-end-stage heart failure:
  - Restricted sodium intake
  - Adherence to dietary guidelines for underlying and comorbid conditions, including coronary heart disease, hypertension, hypercholesterolemia and diabetes.
- However, there is little understanding of the current dietary quality of persons with heart failure.

METHODS

- **Data Source**
  - NHANES is a series of cross-sectional studies conducted by the CDC to provide health information representative of the civilian population.
  - Uses multistage, stratified sampling design to ensure adequate population representation.

- **Target Population**
  - Adults 50 years and over.
  - Self-reported ever being diagnosed with heart failure by a health care provider.
  - Included 524 persons (6.5% of persons age 50+).

- **Dietary Assessments**
  - Single 24 hour recall administered at mobile exam center.
  - Used Food Intake Analysis System (FIAS).

- **Goals defined using:**
  - ACC/AHA heart failure guidelines.
  - AHA dietary guidelines for CVD.
  - Dietary guidelines for Americans.

- **Covariates**
  - Demographic factors: Age, gender, race/ethnicity, education income level.
  - Risk factors: Body mass index (BMI), smoking status.
  - Medical conditions: Provider diagnosis of coronary heart disease, hypertension, hypercholesterolemia and diabetes, years since HF diagnosis.

- **Statistical Analysis**

IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

- Study limitations include self-reported heart failure diagnosis and diet and cross-sectional design.
- Dietary quality of persons with heart failure is poor, with persons of lower education, overweight and obese persons and smokers at greatest risk.
- Poor diet places persons with heart failure at risk for greater symptoms, poorer quality of life, worsening comorbidities and greater mortality rates.
- Behavioral scientists and clinicians are challenged to develop appropriate dietary interventions targeted for this population.