

The Prevalence of Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus and Fasting Impaired Glucose (IFG) in Nepal : Ethnicity and Lifestyle Aspects of a Community-Based Cross-Sectional Tibetan Buddhist Monastery Study in 1990

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Abstract : To compare the prevalence of type 2 diabetes among Tibetan monks and Tibetan immigrants with different lifestyles in Nepal. A total of 202 male monks, ranging in age from 20 to 80 (mean±SD ; 35±17 years) and Tibetan immigrants comprising 235 males participated in this study. The findings of our previous survey (1990) classified based on the 1997 – American Diabetes Association revised criteria were reanalyzed, along with the newly analyzed data conducted in Tibetan Buddhist monasteries (Boudhnath), were compared to the results of Tibetan immigrants in Jawalakhel who had the same genetic origins but quite different lifestyles. Diabetes and impaired fasting glucose (IFG), respectively, were detected in only one (0.5%) and 9 subjects (4.5%) of the 202 Tibetan monks. Diabetes, IFG and obesity (body mass index ≥ 25 kg/m²) were relatively similar to the prevalence rate between Tibetan monks and Tibetan immigrants in Nepal (0.5%, 4.5% and 15.8% vs 2.6%, 2.1% and 14.0%, respectively). The recent concurrent dramatic increase in heterogeneous Nepalese data [Diabetic Med 20:170, 2003 & J Jap Diabetes Society 49 (Suppl 1) : S93, 2006] appears to have been influenced by a more sedentary lifestyle and socioeconomic development more than ethnicity. Our new analysis of the data provide baseline feature for planning health care policy and medical priorities among Tibetan immigrants in Nepal.

Key words : Type 2 diabetes, Prevalence, Tibetan Buddhist Monastery, Environment, Ethnicity, Lifestyle, Nepal