P24 Knowledge, Perception, and Risk Reducing Behaviors Among Female College Students with Family History of Osteoporosis

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Objective: Family history of osteoporosis (FHO) has been recognized as one of the most important risk factors for osteoporosis development. The objective of this study was to compare modifiable risk factors, knowledge and perception about osteoporosis and risk reducing behaviors between female college students with FHO and without FHO.

Study Design, Setting, Participants: A convenience sample of 579 female college students attending a Midwestern state University were recruited. Participants completed an online survey with 67 potential questions.

Outcomes Measured and Analysis: Knowledge, perception, risk perception of osteoporosis, and perception in risk reducing behaviors were analyzed through independent t-tests. Chi-square test was performed to analyze differences in modifiable risks of osteoporosis including calcium intake, sun exposure, smoking, physical activity, and beverage consumption in two groups.

Results: Overall, 16.4% of respondents reported a FHO. Participants with FHO had significantly better knowledge, higher perception and risk perception of osteoporosis. They also perceived they were actively practicing osteoporosis risk reducing behaviors (p<0.05). However, no significant difference was observed in preventative behaviors against osteoporosis including calcium intake, physical activity, caffeinated beverage consumption, sun exposure and smoking between the two groups.

Conclusions and Implications: Students with FHO had more knowledge about osteoporosis, and had higher perception and risk perception of osteoporosis, however they were not engaging in adequate preventive behaviors. This study emphasizes the importance of intervention to reduce the disparity between actual and perceived engagement in preventive behaviors against osteoporosis in this population. Electronic reminders such as daily intake/activity trackers can be an effective tool to provide users with a consistent way of monitoring their intake and activities.

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