

DEVELOPMENT OF A CULTURALLY RELEVANT DIABETES NUTRITION RESOURCE

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BACKGROUND

EthnoMed, an online medical resource created by the joint efforts of Harborview Medical Center and UW Health Sciences Libraries, works with several partners to create **health education resources for various immigrant and refugee communities** in the Seattle area. These resources are used by providers when discussing how culture-specific foods affect blood sugar. Recently, clinicians serving Punjabi-speaking Indian immigrants in the Seattle area identified a **need for diabetes education material specific to the Indian immigrant community**.

OBJECTIVES

The goal of this project was to use information gathered from the literature, community members, and providers to **develop a visual education resource** in the form of PowerPoint slides containing text and images.

QUICK FACTS

- Diabetes is the fifth leading cause of death among Asian Americans
- Asian Americans are ranked second in race or ethnicity with the highest percent of diagnosed diabetes, and first in undiagnosed diabetes
- Indians have the highest prevalence of type 2 diabetes compared to any other Asian subgroup
- Lifestyle interventions including increased physical activity and dietary changes can help manage and slow the progression of diabetes



Picture illustrating a balanced plate with the recommended portion sizes of carbohydrate-containing foods.

METHODS

- Conducted a literature review for background research
- Interviewed local Indian community members about Indian culture and cuisine
- Interviewed providers for clinical insight
- Used information gathered to develop text
- Took original pictures of self-prepared and restaurant-sourced food
- Sourced some photos from Flickr Creative Commons
- Held focus group of community members to review first draft
- Consulted providers to review first draft
- Incorporated comments into next draft
- Final product will be translated into both English and Punjabi



Pictures illustrating the difference between a plate full of rice, and the recommended 1 cup portion of rice.

IMPACT

- Printed format of project will be used in local clinics as visual tool during conversations between providers and Indian patients about diabetes
- Resource will help patients identify foods and drinks that have high and low impact on blood sugar
- Will be especially helpful in teaching recommended portion sizes of foods with high carbohydrate contents
- This resource will also be published on the EthnoMed website, making it accessible to patients and providers living in Washington, the U.S., and abroad



Example of a delicious traditional sweet to be eaten in moderation on special occasions.

REFLECTIONS

Conducting this project during the COVID-19 pandemic presented interesting challenges and lessons:

- Cooking the food for this project at home vs. sourcing from community members provided cultural and culinary insights, but resulted in some dishes not accurately representing home-cooked food, and some photos may need to be retaken
- While in-person interactions are ideal for building connections, future projects may benefit from conducting some meetings over Zoom and the phone to increase reach to community members and providers



Example of a nutritious snack with low impact on blood sugar levels.

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Picture of salt lassi, an alternative to sweet lassis such as mango lassi, shown here in a large and small glass.