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Prevalence of behavioral related risk factors among the patients with chronic liver disease attending Gastroenterology clinic, Teaching Hospital Jaffna

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Introduction & Objectives: Chronic liver disease (CLD) is the end stage of various chronic, progressive liver diseases. Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), alcohol-associated fatty liver disease (ALFD), and hepatitis can lead to CLD. Inadequate physical activity, fast-food consumption, beverage consumption, alcohol consumption, and intravenous (IV) drug use are important behavioural risk factors associated with CLD. CLD is a major cause of morbidity and mortality worldwide. In Sri Lanka, nearly one-quarter of the population is affected by CLD, yet studies investigating behavioural risk factors associated with liver disease remain limited. This study aimed to assess the prevalence of behavioural risk factors associated with chronic liver disease among patients attending the gastroenterology clinic at Teaching Hospital Jaffna.

Materials & Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among chronic liver disease patients attending gastroenterology clinic at the Teaching Hospital Jaffna. A total of 99 patients who consented to participate were enrolled. Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics Review Committee of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, and variables such as physical activity, fast food consumption alcohol and beverage consumption and IV drug use were analyzed by univariate analysis using SPSS 27.

Results: The mean age of the participants was 49.86 years (range: 12–78 years), and the majority (52.5%) were male. The results indicated a high prevalence of beverage consumption (83.8%), while inadequate physical activity was reported by 75.8% of participants. Fast-food consumption was reported by 18.2%, while a history of hepatitis and intravenous drug use was reported by 4%. Tattoos were reported by 5.1% of participants, and a history of alcohol consumption was reported by 26.3% of those with alcohol-associated liver disease (ALFD).

Conclusions: Several behavioural risk factors were associated with CLD among participants attending the Gastroenterology clinic in Jaffna. Inadequate physical activity, fast food and beverage consumption, and alcohol consumption were identified as important contributing factors. To improve patient outcomes, early diagnosis through liver function testing and risk-based management protocols should be implemented.

Keywords: chronic liver disease, Behavioral related risk factor, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, Teaching Hospital Jaffna.