
Title : Nutritional Awareness and Physical Fitness of Adult Male Cricketers**Author(s) :** Salima Beddingwala and Dr. Subhadra Mandalika**Institution :** College of Home Science, Nirmala Niketan, 49-NewMarine Lines, Mumbai-20

Introduction:

The nutritional requirements of athletes differ between sports persons depending on age, sex, body size and composition, type of sport, phase of training and physiological conditions. Optimum nutrition not only enhances performance but can also aid in the prevention of injuries, boost recovery from exercise stress, maintenance of body weight and on the whole promote health.

Aim:

The aim of the study was to find out the association between the knowledge, attitude and practices of adult male cricketers regarding dietary practices and hydration strategies with their physical fitness.

Methodology:

A total of 33 adult male cricketers (18-23 years) were selected from United Cricketers, Jaffer Sports academy, Parsi gymkhana, Sundar academy and Matunga gymkhana using purposive sampling technique. Information on knowledge, attitude and dietary practices regarding pre, during and post game meal consumption; and hydration strategies was collected using a standardized questionnaire. The physical fitness components were assessed using different fitness tests like push ups, curl ups, 30 meter sprint test, squats test, sit and reach test, hand grip strength test, balance test and hand eye coordination test. Results obtained were statistically analyzed using SPSS version-16

Result:

Majority of the participants had a positive attitude towards the role of nutrition on sports performance but their knowledge was poor especially regarding micronutrients. Selection of foods for consumption prior to, during and post game was inappropriate in most of the participants. The pre match food intake of the subjects was lower than the recommendations by ICMR which could be due to the stress and gastric discomfort that might occur after a heavy meal. During the match, most of the subjects consumed lunch items like chapatti, rice and vegetables except for a few who did not consume anything. Post match, in comparison to the recommendations, the subjects were consuming high fat snacks. Water intake was less than the recommended guidelines. Results of physical fitness showed that the handgrip strength, muscular strength and endurance of the participants was poor, although the leg strength was excellent in most of the participants. The overall physical fitness of the participants was lower due to flaws in the training pattern. Participants were not following any structured training program that might have improved their fitness.

Conclusion:

The study indicated a strong need for creating awareness among adult cricketers on the role of good nutritional practices and structured training pattern in order to improve physical fitness and thereby enhance their performance.