

Effects of a proposed physical activity and diet control to manage constipation in middle-aged obese women.

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Abstract

Background:

Obesity is very common worldwide and is related to critical morbidity and mortality. It has a large number of impacts on the human body. Constipation has a prevalence from 4% to 29% in various parts of the world and is considered to be a major health problem, with an estimated incidence of 5% in males and 15% in females. There is a strong association between obesity and constipation. This study aimed to investigate the effect of physical activity and a low-calorie diet on constipation in middle-aged obese women.

Methods:

This study included 125 obese women (age 20-40 years) who had chronic constipation. Participants were randomly assigned to two groups. Group A included 62 women who received a suggested protocol of physical activity, a low-calorie diet, and the routine standard care for constipation, whereas Group B included 63 women who received only the standard medical care for constipation and a low-calorie diet. Both groups followed the program for 12 weeks. Changes in the Patient Assessment of Constipation Symptoms (PAC-SYM) and Patient Assessment Quality of Life (PAC-QOL) scores, and in the body mass index (BMI) were recorded in study subjects, both at baseline and at the end of the study program.

Results:

There were no statistically significant differences in the baseline characteristics of patients in the two groups. After 12 weeks of intervention, both groups showed significant intra-group differences ($p < 0.05$) in all of the measured variables, except the BMI which showed a nonsignificant difference ($p > 0.05$) in Group B. Between-groups comparison showed significant differences ($p < 0.05$) in all of the measured parameters in favor of Group A.

Conclusion:

Physical activity and weight reduction improve PAC-SYM and PAC-QOL scores in middle-aged, premenopausal women with constipation in the short term (up to 12 weeks).

KEYWORDS:

constipation; low-calorie diet; obesity; patient assessment quality of life; physical activity