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**LIFE STYLES AND DIETARY HABITS OF MEDICAL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS
AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE RISK**

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Relevance. Cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) remain a leading cause of morbidity and mortality worldwide, with modifiable risk factors such as suboptimal dietary habits, physical inactivity, smoking, and excessive alcohol consumption contributing significantly to their development. Young adulthood, particularly among university students, represents a critical period for the establishment of long-term health behaviors. Medical students, despite possessing theoretical knowledge of health risks, may still engage in unhealthy lifestyle practices due to academic pressures, irregular schedules, and limited time for self-care.

Aim: to assess the lifestyle of Belarusian State Medical University (BSMU) students as a risk factor for the development of cardiovascular diseases.

Materials and methods. A cross-sectional survey-based study was conducted among BSMU students utilizing a structured questionnaire administered via Google Forms. The questionnaire comprised questions pertaining to anthropometric parameters (BMI, waist circumference), dietary habits, physical activity levels, and bad habits.

Results and their discussion. Forty students aged 19-27 years participated in the survey, comprising 65% females and 35% males, with the age distribution peaking in the 20-30 year range. Anthropometric data revealed a concerning trend towards overweight and obesity, particularly among male participants. The majority of students (53.8%) reported consuming two meals per day, with 10.3% consuming one meal and 35.9% reporting three or more meals. Concurrently, a majority of students reported consuming fast food (60%). A small proportion of respondents indicated adequate fruit and vegetable intake (30%). Energy drinks were consumed by 37.5% of the respondents. Regular physical activity (gym attendance, group exercise) was reported by 84.6% of students, whereas 15.4% reported no regular physical activity. Regarding substance use, 5% reported regular tobacco smoking and 10% reported alcohol consumption.

Conclusion. This study highlights the paradoxical disconnect between medical students' theoretical awareness of cardiovascular health and their personal lifestyle choices. Given their future roles as healthcare providers, addressing these behaviors early is crucial not only for their own long-term health but also for their credibility in promoting preventative care. Interventions such as university-based wellness programs, nutritional education initiatives, and stress management workshops may help mitigate prospective CVD risks in this population.