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LIFESTYLES AND HEALTH BEHAVIOURS OF YOUNG ADULTS WITH TYPE 1 DIABETES IN PORTUGAL

Background Adherence to diabetes management and the quality of life of young adults with type 1 diabetes (DM1) can be affected by the several changes occurring during emerging adulthood: social, occupational, familiar and emotional. **Aims** Evaluation of lifestyles, health behaviours, treatment adherence and social support of young adults with DM1. **Methods** This research included a quantitative study with questionnaires filled in by 278 young adults with DM1 (18 –35 years old). **Results** Participants reported satisfaction with life as 6.6 ± 1.7 (scale 0-10). Most of young adults show good adherence to dietary intake (83%), insulin therapy (83%) and glucose monitoring (73%), but only one third practice recommended physical activity. We verified positive statistically significant correlation between adherence to nutrition, insulin therapy and glucose monitoring. Youngsters present $8.7 \pm 1.6\%$ as mean value for HbA1c. Highest HbA1c levels were correlated to less global adherence to diabetes treatment, perception of health, satisfaction with life and psychological adaptation to diabetes. 25% present diabetes complications. The best representations about diabetes were positively correlated with adherence to nutrition and insulin therapy. Youngsters with better psychological adaptation to diabetes have better adherence to diabetes treatment relating to nutrition, insulin therapy and glucose monitoring. They reported good social support and referred the benefits of group activities with peers. **Conclusions** Young adults showed satisfactory social support, health behaviours and satisfaction with life and a reasonable adherence to diabetes treatment, although with a less satisfactory metabolic control of diabetes. Further research with focus groups will help to better understand these discrepancies

Keywords:

Young adults, Type 1 Diabetes, Health behaviours, Lifestyles, Social support

Congress Topics:

Connecting, Sharing and Learning in Nursing