

Caffeine Consumption Levels and Knowledge among Adults in the United Arab Emirates: Insights from a Nationwide Survey

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Introduction: Caffeine is widely used as a cognitive, physical & psychomotor booster. Recent studies have suggested worrying trends of overconsumption of caffeine, accompanied by higher risk for multiple diseases including diabetes mellitus type 2. The aim of this study is to assess caffeine consumption levels among the United Arab Emirates (UAE) adult population, as well as the population general knowledge and attitude regarding its health implications.

Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted from July to August 2016 on 403 randomly chosen people from 5 emirates in the UAE. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed through a non-probability sampling method. The number of participants selected from each emirate was proportionate to the population size of each city.

Results: The mean total caffeine consumed per day was 316.7 mg. More than 98.5% of the study participants were caffeine consumers, with 31% reported being addicted to caffeine. The mean level of knowledge about caffeine was less than 33%, indicating poor knowledge background regarding caffeine effects on health and well-being. Younger participants ($P=0.008$) and those who work in healthcare & education ($P<0.001$) were significantly more knowledgeable.

Conclusion: Caffeine consumption is very prevalent among UAE population which ranks high among other countries. There is a lack of accurate knowledge regarding the effects of caffeine on health and well-being. Healthy consumption behaviours need to be promoted through a better awareness and transparent environment. Labelling caffeinated products with fact sheets and enhancing educational programs through social media and others may improve safe caffeine consumption behaviours.

Keywords: Caffeine consumption, Knowledge, Public health