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Diet, Water, and Exercise: Impacts on Non-Communicable Disease in Madolenihmw and Uh Municipalities on Pohnpei Island, Federated States of Micronesia

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ABSTRACT

A 2013 article referred to non-communicable diseases (NCD) as “a health emergency” in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and identified five critical NCD risk factors in FSM: daily smoking, overweight, high blood pressure, low consumption of fruits and vegetables, and a low level of physical activity. The objective of this study is to determine the impact of diet, water, and exercise on NCD in Madolenihmw and Uh municipalities, Pohnpei, FSM. We hypothesize that poor diet, poor quality of drinking water, and inadequate exercise contribute significantly to the incidence of NCD in Madolenihmw and Uh municipalities.

Data were collected from 52 individuals through interviews and personal observations in Madolenihmw and U. All interviewees say that they eat white rice in all meals, seven days a week. In contrast, production and consumption of green leafy and fruit vegetables is severely deficient. Majority (52%) of the interviewees identified “diarrhea” as their main source of complaint during January-May, 2015. A majority (71%) also indicated that they use untreated water from nearby rivers or streams for drinking. Only a minority (39%) appear to have an adequate level of physical activity.

The hypothesis is accepted. The water quality factor needs special consideration as it was not identified in the above-mentioned 2013 article and its importance needs to be highlighted.

Key Words: Non-communicable Diseases, Diet, Water, Exercise, Pohnpei

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