

Quality of life of vegetarians during the covid-19 pandemic in Brazil

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Abstract

Health emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic can negatively impact quality of life (QoL) due to higher levels of stress, social isolation, and uncertainties. In this scenario, distinct population groups might react differently. Vegetarians, who follow a non-conventional dietary pattern, could be more vulnerable to the abrupt changes in normal life routine and economic instability. Therefore, this study aimed at evaluating if the current pandemic situation somehow affected vegetarians' QoL. A cross-sectional study was carried out in Brazil between 28 July and 14 September 2020 to evaluate the QoL in vegetarians during the pandemic period. Vegetarian adults replied to an online survey that included the VEGQOL and WHOQOL-BREF instruments to evaluate QoL and questions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. A total of 1282 individuals participated. Only 3.8% had tested positive for COVID-19, but 39.9% affirmed having a family member who tested positive for the disease. Almost half (46.3%) of the sample had an income drop due to the pandemic. Results of QoL scores in the different subcategories of vegetarians were similar to previously published data. Individuals who had already tested positive for COVID-19 had lower QoL scores than those who did not test positive, but only in the VEGQOL. QoL was lower for the participants who declared that Sars-Cov-2 had already infected a family member for almost all the parameters evaluated. On the other hand, an income drop affected QoL only partially. Studying how vegetarians are influenced by such conditions contributes to the generation of relevant data that can be used to support healthcare and public policies in the future. © 2021 by the authors. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland.

Author keywords

COVID-19; Pandemic; Quality of life; Vegetarians