

Relationships of colorectal cancer with dietary factors and public health indicators: an ecological study.

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Abstract

BACKGROUND:

Colorectal cancer (CRC) is the third most common cancer in Iranian women and fifth in men. The aims of this study were to investigate the relation of dietary factors and public health indicators to its development.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

The required information (2001-2006) about risk factors was obtained from the Non-Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre (NCDSC) of Iran. Risk factor data (RFD) from 89,404 individuals (15-64 years old) were gathered by questionnaire and laboratory examinations through a cross sectional study in all provinces by systematic clustering sampling method. CRC incidence segregated by age and gender was obtained from Cancer Registry Ministry of Health (CRMH) of Iran. First, correlation coefficients were used for data analysis and then multiple regression analysis was performed to control for confounding factors.

RESULTS:

Colorectal cancer incidence showed a positive relationship with diabetes mellitus, hypertension, lacking or low physical activity, high education, high intake of dairy products, and non-consumption of vegetables and fruits.

CONCLUSIONS:

We concluded that many dietary factors and public health indicators have positive relationships with CRC and might therefore be targets of preliminary prevention. However, since this is an ecological study limited by potential ecological fallacy the results must be interpreted with caution.