

C5.

### Trends in Intake of Fruits and Vegetables by G.C.E (A/L) Students in JAFFNA Zonal Schools

Shanmugaratnam, L., Thayaanathan, K., Kandeepan, S., Balakumar, S. and Arasaratnam, V.

*Department of Biochemistry, Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna*

The aim of the study was to assess the intake of fruits and vegetables by the students and to compile the trends of intake. Twenty schools were selected randomly from a list of all twenty-seven schools in Jaffna zone. Four hundred and thirty students were selected from the schools proportionately. Questionnaire was used to assess the intake of food for a week prior to research. Two tablespoons are considered to be equivalent of one serving of vegetables. The data obtained is analyzed and mean value for each category of fruits and vegetables are calculated. Overall average consumption of vegetables in servings (one serving is equivalent to two table spoons) per day was decreasing in the order of potato (1.19), drumstick (0.58), carrot (0.61), brinjal (0.36) ladies finger (0.18), beetroot (0.17) and pumpkin (0.16) and the leafy vegetable intake was in decreasing order from spinach (*Amaranthus gangeticus*) (0.56), murukkamilai (leaves of *Moringa oleifera*) (0.17) vallarai (*Centella asiatica*) (0.25), ponnankani (*Alternanthera sessilis*) (0.12), agathi (*Sesbani grandiflora*) (0.08). The average consumption scores for fruits indicate that banana consumption was highest and the order was bananas (0.95), mangoes (0.15), and 0.13 pieces of papaw, 0.1 oranges, and 0.14 apples. According to the results obtained the adolescent intake of fruits and vegetables are grossly inadequate because the ministry of health recommends 2 to 3 servings of fruits and 3 to 4 servings of vegetables per day. Also it is notable that potato and banana intake were high which are rich in carbohydrates. Intake of green leafy vegetables is also very low.

**Keywords:** *Fruit, vegetables, green leafy vegetables, servings*