

CHANGES OF EATING HABITS DURING COVID-19 RELATED PANDEMIC

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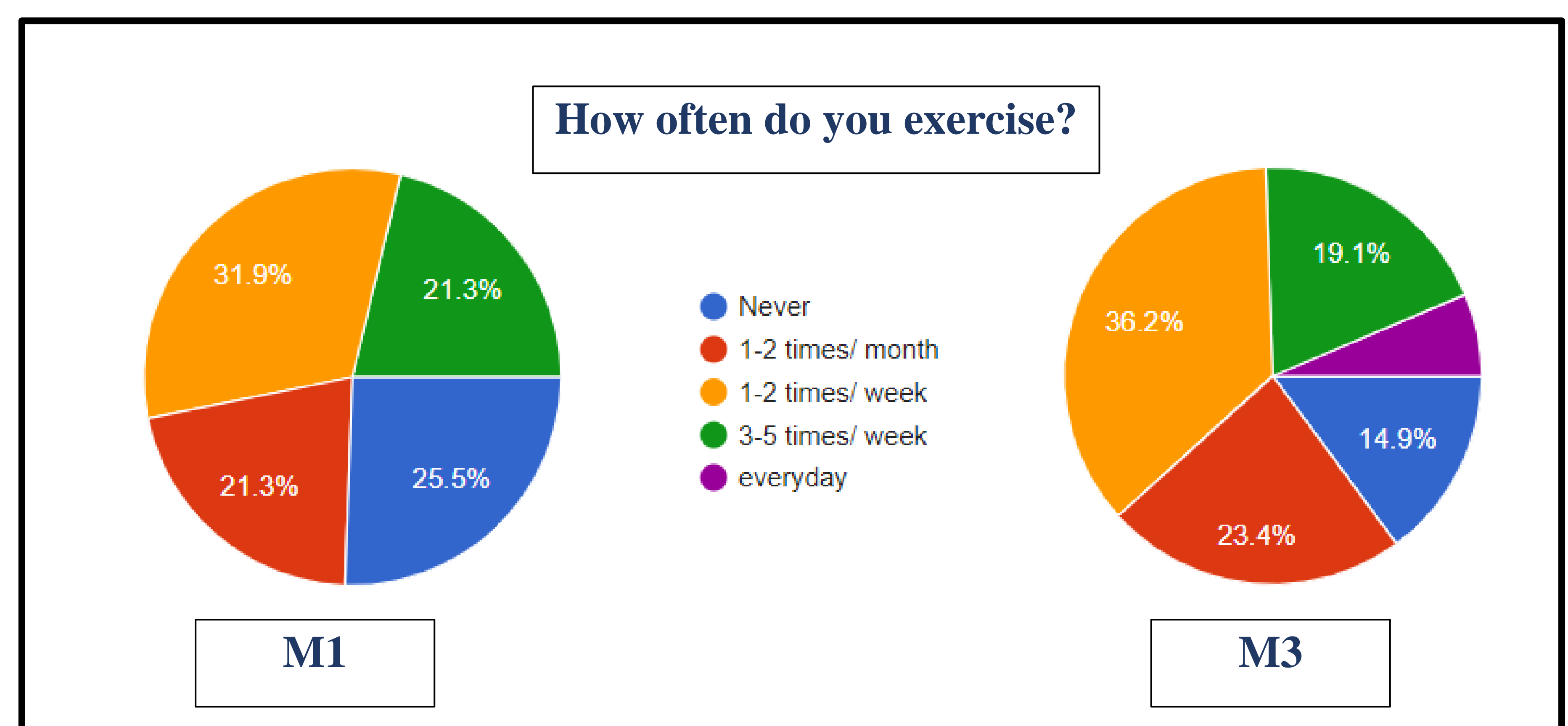
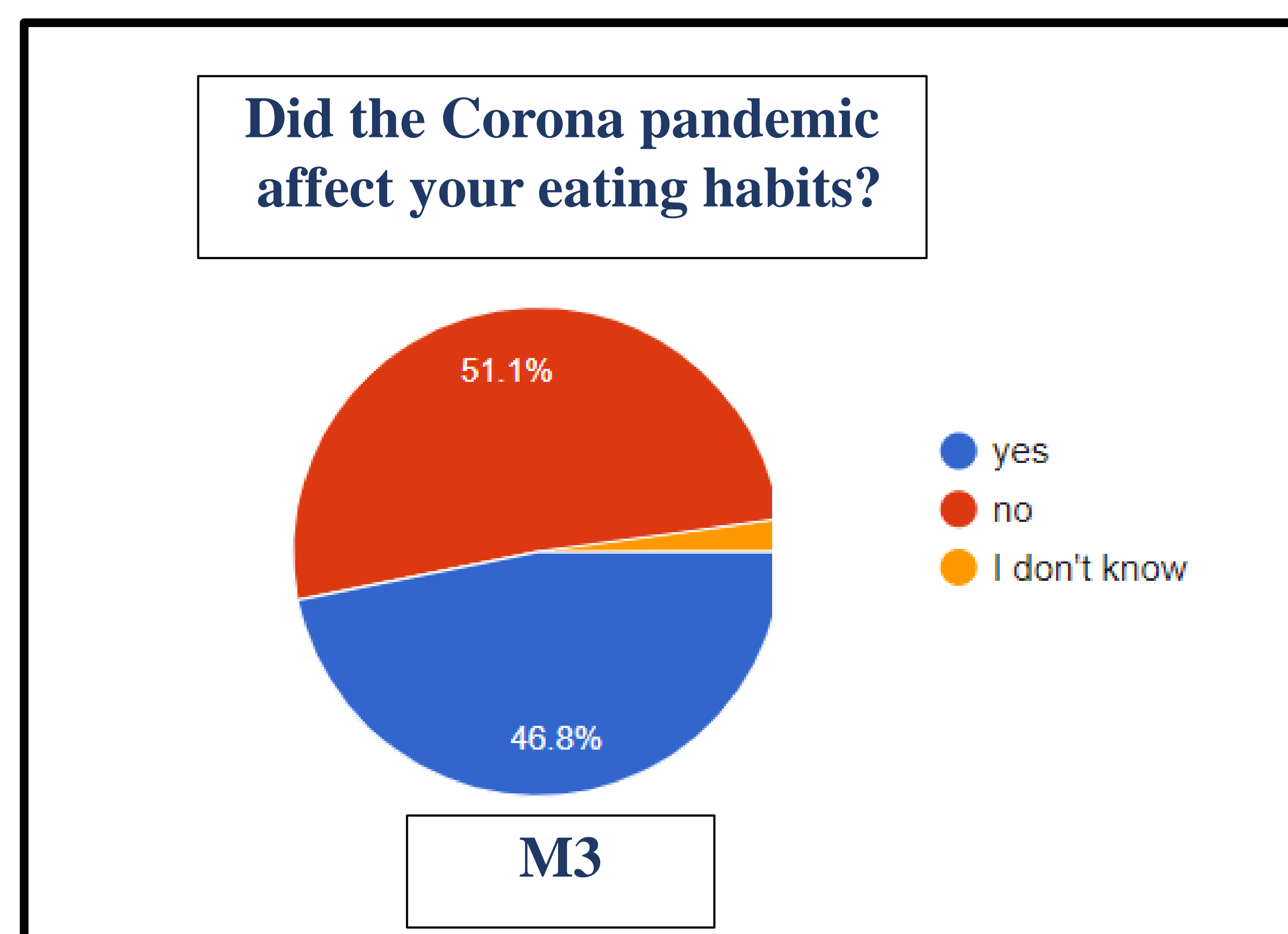
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Introduction: Body weight can be influenced by a variety of factors including physical activity, eating habits and mental stress such as COVID-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, students had to stay at home, and it may affect their everyday activity, as well as physical and mental wellbeing.

Aim of the study: to evaluate how the COVID-19 pandemic influences the eating habits and body weight in students of medical faculty.

Material and methods: 44 medical students (25 males), aged 20 to 32 were enrolled in the study. We used a structured questionnaire for analysis of demographic information, anthropometric data, medical and family history, dietary habits and its changes during the exam period and also during the COVID pandemic. Tanita BC-1000 Body Composition Monitor was used for measurement of body weight, body mass index (BMI) and body composition. 3 assessments were performed: the 1st was in October 2019 (M1), the 2nd one was in February 2020 (M2) and the 3rd one was in June-July 2020 (M3).

Results: We found that during pandemic (M3) the frequency of coffee consumption demonstrates positive correlation with alcohol consumption ($r=0.39$, $p<0.02$), negative correlation with frequency of personal contact with family ($r=-0.466$, $p<0.01$) and negative correlation with number of mean meals per day ($r=-0.383$, $p<0.02$); frequency of vegetables consumption has positive correlation with consumption of fruits ($r=0.392$, $p<0.02$). Analysis with T-test for dependent samples didn't show significant changes neither of weight nor of BMI of medical students during pandemic in comparison with period one year before the pandemic (M3 to M1 and M3 to M2). During pandemic (M3), body weight demonstrates positive correlation with frequency of salty, fat food consumption ($r=0.397$, $p<0.02$) and negative correlation with frequency of fruits consumption ($r=-0.426$, $p<0.01$ for M3).



Conclusion: Body weight of medical students during initial period of COVID-19 pandemic remained stable. Consumption of salty and fat food, lack of fruit consumption are significant factors, influencing body weight of medical students during COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, we found out that eating habit changed but at the same time, physical activity increased, thus the overall weight left the same.