

didn't seek any medical advice or treatment for diabetes related concerns, 19 (25.3%) may have sought advice or treatments and 6 (8%) have sought medical advice or treatment for diabetes related concerns. At the end of the survey some of them shared their concerns regarding Diabetes mellitus stated some most important facts and emphasized that diabetes can be a huge threat to medical students who don't follow a proper nutritional diet and who do not routinely monitor the blood glucose level. There were also other concerns on maintaining a good work-life balance, awareness among students, also emphasized on comprehensive training on Diabetes mellitus vital for medical students; holistic curriculum and hands-on experience essential for effective care.

### ***Conclusion***

In this study it was concluded that even though most of them were not diagnosed with Diabetes mellitus the rate of developing Diabetes mellitus in the near future is higher. The rising prevalence among the young has been linked to factors such as unhealthy eating habits and insufficient exercise, stress from exams and ongoing evaluation, smoking, which are common among college-age groups, and non-modifiable risk factors, which include a family history of Diabetes mellitus. Therefore, interventional lifestyle counselling, physical activity programs, and dietary advice are highly recommended. It is also highly necessary to routinely monitor the blood glucose level as most of the participants 44 (60.3%) have a family background with Diabetes mellitus. This can help in preventing future diabetes risk in while also predicting the likelihood of having diabetes.

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## **EVALUATION OF WATER AND FOOD SAFETY KNOWLEDGE AMONG FOREIGN STUDENTS LIVING IN BELARUS**

### **Introduction**

Water and food which is the main source of survival for life, has led to various adverse conditions, diseases and even death due to – the improper usage, handling and poor sanitary practices over thousands of years around the world. Proper safety measures are taken by people to avoid such circumstances which has become a part of their daily life style. Consumption of food that is contaminated by microorganisms or chemical agents such as pesticides is the major cause of gastrointestinal diseases [1]. Consumption of water in Belarus contaminated by different strains of enteroviruses [2], other biological compounds, nuclear radiation and heavy metals such as nitrates [3] have caused kidney diseases, meningitis and cancer that has led to

serious conditions or deaths over the past years. This remains a public health concern that is challenging for both local citizens and foreign students living and studying in Belarus.

### ***Goal***

Therefore the main goal of this article is to evaluate the level of knowledge and the understanding among the foreign students in Belarus about the safety measures to be carried out in preparing, handling and consuming food and water in order to prevent such health problems.

### ***Material and methods of research***

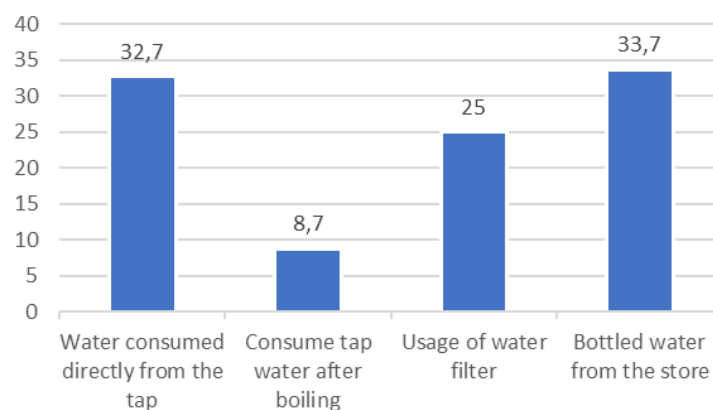
An online survey through a Google Form was conducted on 104 foreign students living in the 4 states of Belarus – Gomel, Minsk, Grodno and Vitebsk to gather statistical data regarding the knowledge, lifestyle, water and food consumption safety practices among them. The national level percentages and statistical data of The Republic of Belarus mentioned in this article were referred from the UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe) official summary report on water and health for The Republic of Belarus [4]. Definitions and other related data were collected from PubMed articles [1–6].

### ***The results of the research and their discussion***

Diseases and ill conditions caused by contaminated food and water has been common among the foreign students living in Belarus. The online survey that was conducted included 61 students living in Gomel, 36 students living in Minsk and a minority of 7 students from Grodno and Vitebsk. Out of the total number of students 73.1% were between the ages of 20 to 25 years. The students were asked about the safety measures they take to prevent food or water borne diseases and the diseases or previous conditions they have experienced in the time period of living in Belarus.

Even though drinking water suitable for human consumption that meets the standard protocol after conducting regulatory assessments is distributed throughout the parts of Belarus many waterborne infectious diseases and non-communicable diseases have been spreading among the people living in the country. Diseases such as Cholera, Dysentery, Typhoid, Viral Hepatitis A and kidney diseases have been distinguished among the patients through the portable water that is consumed [4]. It is important to take measures such as boiling the water or using a water filter to prevent the contamination of diseases and to reduce the risk.

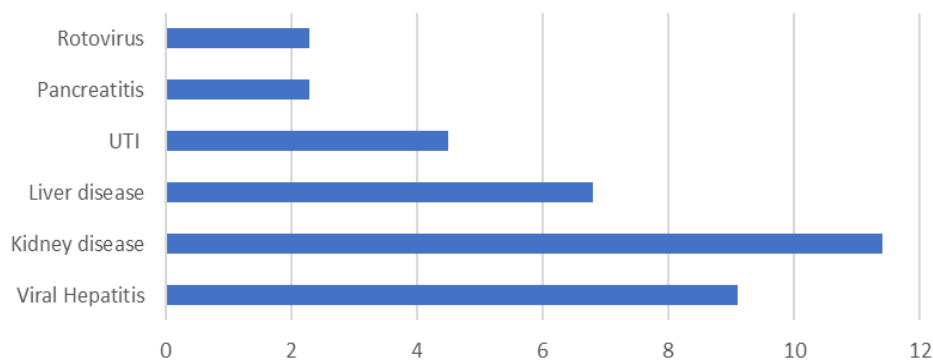
Among the students that participated in the online survey, were different ways of how water was utilized. The percentage results are summarized in Figure 1 as follows:



***Figure 1 – Percentage of water safety measures taken before consumption by the sample group***

Food borne diseases and food poisoning that mainly indicates nausea, vomiting, diarrhea have also been diagnosed among foreign students due to the improper handling, storage, poor

sanitation and bad dietary habits. Salmonellosis is one of the major food borne severe infections in humans that spreads by eggs and raw egg products [6]. A recent study has shown that the infection was acquired outside hospitals of the patients examined in the region of Gomel [5]. It is necessary to be mindful about the storage of products like eggs in order to prevent infectious food borne diseases. Therefore in the online survey conducted, two ways of storage of store bought eggs by the foreign students were analyzed. 68.3% of the students keep the store bought eggs inside the refrigerator while the remaining 31.7% keep it outside, which makes these students at a higher risk of being diagnosed with salmonellosis. The online survey also focused on the diseases and conditions that the foreign students have experienced while living in Belarus. From which majority could have been due to the improper consumption of water and food due to lack of safety measures.



**Figure 2 – Diseases or conditions experienced by the sample group while living in Belarus**

### **Conclusion**

It is well known and clear that there is a high risk of diseases and ill conditions that could prevail through contaminated water and food in Belarus the local citizens and also the foreign students. The necessity of reducing risk of contamination and transmission of diseases should be minimized as much as possible to lead a healthy life. In view of this it is important for foreign students living and studying in Belarus to have a broad understanding about the safety measures to be taken when consuming water and food, and the consequences that can arise due to ignorance or the lack of knowledge.

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