

Poster Communication 44

## Behavioral Risk Factors and Health: Assessing Alcohol and Tobacco Use in a Diabetic Population

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### Abstract

**Background:** Diabetes mellitus (DM) represents a major public health challenge worldwide and in Portugal, where its prevalence continues to increase. Alcohol and tobacco consumption are recognised behavioural risk factors that may exacerbate both microvascular and macrovascular complications associated with diabetes. Understanding the patterns of these behaviours in local diabetic populations is essential for developing targeted prevention and health promotion strategies. **Objective:** To assess the levels and patterns of alcohol and tobacco consumption among adults with diabetes residing in Ponte de Lima and to explore potential health implications associated with these behaviours. **Materials and Methods:** A descriptive cross-sectional exploratory study was conducted with 30 adults diagnosed with diabetes mellitus, recruited through non-probabilistic snowball sampling. Data were collected using three instruments: a sociodemographic questionnaire, the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT), and the Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test (ASSIST), both developed and validated by the World Health Organization. Descriptive statistical analysis was performed to characterise the sample and consumption patterns. **Results:** Participants were predominantly female (70%) with a mean age of 54.7 years. Most participants had Type 2 diabetes (73.3%) and were treated primarily with oral antidiabetic medication (86.7%). Alcohol consumption was generally low, with 33.3% reporting consumption once a month or less and 93.3% reporting one to two drinks on a typical drinking occasion. AUDIT results indicated no evidence of hazardous or harmful alcohol use. Regarding tobacco use, 66.7% of participants reported never having smoked, and 80% reported no tobacco consumption in the previous three months. ASSIST scores suggested minimal risk, with no significant reported health, social, or financial consequences related to substance use. **Conclusions:** Alcohol and tobacco consumption in this sample of adults with diabetes was generally low and largely non-problematic. Although limited by the small non-probabilistic sample, the findings suggest a potentially favourable behavioural profile within this community. Continued health education and preventive strategies remain important for supporting metabolic control and reducing the risk of diabetes-related complications.

**Keywords:** Diabetes mellitus; Alcohol consumption; Tobacco use; Health behaviour

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