SUMMARY

Diabetes mellitus (DM) is a major global health problem and its prevalence is rising worldwide in both developed and developing countries. Evidence suggests that the rising prevalence of DM in sub-Saharan Africa has largely been ascribed to changes in lifestyle and rapid ‘nutrition transition’ in this region, resulting in greater levels of obesity and physical inactivity. It is pertinent therefore to study the prevalence of and assess risk factors for diabetes mellitus within the study area.

This study was aimed at determining the prevalence of diabetes mellitus and associated risk factors among adult attendees at the General Outpatient Clinic (GOPC) of the Federal Medical Centre, Owerri. For this study, a descriptive cross-sectional design was used. A total of 107 consenting and eligible adult patients made up of 64 females and 43 males, aged 18 years and above, were selected by systematic random sampling method on a daily basis throughout the study period. Participants were interviewed by the author using an interviewer administered questionnaire. Socio-demographic data were collected while anthropometric, blood pressure and blood glucose measurement were performed by the author using standardized procedure. Data were analysed using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS), version 15.0. Result showed that the overall prevalence of DM was 21.5%. There was no association between diabetes mellitus and respondent’s age, sex, cigarette smoking status, level of alcohol intake, level of physical activity, body mass index, hypertensive status and family history of diabetes. However, DM was significantly associated with low intake of fruits and vegetables (P=0.004), visitation to fast food
centres (P=0.001) and consumption of ice cream (P=0.013). Following a multiple regression analysis, diabetes mellitus was independently associated with low intake of fruits and vegetables and visitation to fast food centres (which was associated with consumption of food with high glyceamic load and sugar- sweetened beverages) and were thus, significant risk factors for diabetes mellitus amongst the study population.