

A26 Changes in lifestyle, mental health, and body weight status among Malaysian adults before and during the COVID-19

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The Movement Control Orders (MCO) in Malaysia due to COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on the lifestyle behaviors, weight changes, and mental health of the population. This study aims to determine the changes in physical activity, sedentary behavior, body weight status, and mental health status among the Malaysian adults and assess the risk factors associated with body weight changes during the pandemic. A total of 338 Malaysian adults participated in this cross-sectional online study. Sociodemographic and anthropometric information including weight and height were self-reported. Physical activity and sedentary behaviour were assessed using International Physical Activity Questionnaire-Short Form (IPAQ-SF) while Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10), Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9), and Generalised Anxiety Disorder Assessment (GAD-7) were used to examine stress, depression, and anxiety, respectively. All data were collected at two time points, before and during the pandemic and all statistical analysis was performed using SPSS version 28.0. The results showed an average weight gain of 0.6kg among the participants with 45.5% of them experiencing weight gain. In addition, sedentary behavior ($p<0.001$), PSS-10 score ($p<0.001$), PHQ-9 score ($p=0.002$) and GAD-7 score ($p=0.001$) were significantly increased during the COVID-19 pandemic whereas the level of physical activity was significantly decreased ($p=0.003$) during the pandemic. Weight change during the pandemic was found to be associated with age, sedentary hours, and PHQ-9 score. Through binary logistic regression, sedentary hours (AOR=1.068, 95% CI=1.002 – 1.139, $p=0.043$) was identified to be a risk factor of weight gain during the pandemic. In conclusion, lifestyle changes were associated with weight gain among Malaysian adults during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, promoting healthy lifestyle and well-being via nutrition education should be implemented during the pandemic to alleviate weight gain-related complications.