

Abstract Title:

Therapeutic Christmas hampers: Impact on nutrition knowledge, attitudes and behaviour with hemodialysis patients

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Objectives: The purpose of this study was to evaluate the impact of an annual 'food box' program at the TBRHSC hemodialysis unit.

Methods: The renal appropriate Christmas hampers consisted of low phosphorus, potassium, and sodium food items with recipes to prepare a dinner, dessert and breakfast meal including a beverage for two people. A 5-item survey was administered to 177 patients receiving hemodialysis in the Thunder Bay site one to two days after receiving the hamper. The survey included open and closed ended questions related to patient's knowledge of food items and overall satisfaction. Completed surveys were collected and responses inputted and analyzed in Excel© using frequencies and pivot tables.

Results: The response rate was 67% (n=119). Of those who responded, 15 chose not to accept the hamper for various reasons. Nearly half (44%, n=99 responses) reported an introduction to a new food. Of these 44 patients, 66% (n=29 responses) said they were likely to purchase the new food again. The average satisfaction rating of the hampers was 8.8 out of 10 (n=99 responses). Limitations included a lack of clarity with some questions, insufficient administrator assistance (English was a second language for some patients) and survey timing (many patients had not had an opportunity to try the foods yet).

Conclusion: This small study showed that an innovative approach with therapeutic Christmas hampers introduced new foods to this patient population which may motivate them to purchase and consume in the future. A larger and longer term study with more diverse hemodialysis patients and sites is needed to fully understand translation of nutrition knowledge to behaviour change.

Significance to the field of Dietetics: This study contributes to understanding novel patient centered interventions for behaviour change in other populations adhering to therapeutic diets; ultimately increasing quality of life and decreasing morbidity and mortality for those living with chronic disease.