Letter to the Editor

Prevalence of Low HDL-Cholesterol Levels and Associated Factors Among Koreans

To the Editor:
I read with interest the article regarding low high-density lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL-C) levels in Koreans (Circ J 2006; 70: 820–826). The study confirms findings we published in Circulation in 1982 (reference 17) and also confirms the small difference in HDL-C levels between men and women in Far-Eastern populations. In Korea the mean sex difference is 3.4 mg/dl compared to 9–12 mg/dl in Western populations. We published a hypothesis linking the sex differences in HDL-C levels to the level of (saturated) fat intake and the level of sex hormones. The level of total fat intake (and thus of saturated fat) is still very low in Korea (17% of total energy) compared to Western countries (36–40%). We have also shown that alcohol, physical exercise, polyunsaturated fat intake and smoking influence the serum HDL-C levels. The recent study in Koreans offers interesting confirmatory evidence on the differential effect of fat on the HDL-C levels in men and women.

References

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