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Self-Management among the Ethnic Groups with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus in Thailand

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Abstract : The prevalence of diabetes mellitus has been rising all over the world. Self-management is required for diabetes mellitus patients. The objective of this study is to explore the self-management among the ethnic groups with type 2 diabetes mellitus in Thailand, an upper middle-income country which is located in South East Asia. The ethnic groups in Thailand are a minority group which has limited education and a different culture, language, costume and lifestyle from Thai people. The qualitative exploratory study was used in this study. In-depth interviews with semi-structured open questions were conducted by 20 participants from purposive sampling. These participants were the ethnic groups who have type 2 diabetes mellitus, received the services from a region hospital, understood Thai and were willing to participate. Content analysis was adopted for the study. The results showed that all of the participants controlled their diet before the appointment day and never miss their appointment. Only 3 participants did their exercise while 2 participants stated that they occasionally forgot to take medicine. 10 participants use the herbs for reducing the sugar level. 12 participants drank a lot of water after a lapse in the diet because they believed that water could dilute the sugar. The findings identified 5 themes; 'controlling diet before appointment day'; 'drinking water after a lapse in diet'; 'medication being a vital importance'; 'exercise is unimportant'; and 'taking herbs for sugar reduction'. The results of this study are important to the health professionals to understand the self-management of Ethnic groups and use the data to create the appropriate intervention for promoting health among the ethnic groups with type 2 diabetes mellitus in Thailand. The findings will lead to the revision of health policy and the procedure for promoting health in this special ethnic groups.

Keywords : self-management, diabetes, ethnic groups, Thailand

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