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HIGH PREVALENCE OF HYPOVITAMINOSIS D IN A POPULATION OF BRAZILIAN WOMEN – SHOULD IT BE CONSIDERED A PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE?

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INTRODUCTION: Hypovitaminosis D is pathology with high prevalence worldwide, even in tropical areas, including Brazil. Local studies emphasizes the importance of public health interventions such as promoting sunlight exposure, cholecalciferol supplementation and food fortification with vitamin D, which should be encouraged in our country. Our aim was to evaluate the association between hypovitaminosis D, quality of life and skin pigmentation level in women of an outpatient multidisciplinary group of studies on quality of life from a private clinic.
METHODS: Between 2011 and 2013, the cross-sectional study examined serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D (25OHD) levels, quality of life and skin pigmentation. Hypovitaminosis D was defined by 25OHD levels <30 ng/mL, quality of life was assessed through the Short Form 36 (SF-36) Health Survey Questionnaire, whereas skin pigmentation level was determined according to the Fitzpatrick Scale.
RESULTS: We evaluated 551 women with mean age of 46.7±11.6 years. Mean levels of 25OHD found were 20.52±7.19 ng/mL and hypovitaminosis D was observed in 389 patients (70.6%). Most participants were classified with skin pigmentation levels between II (55.3%) and III (27.0%). Through the analysis of quality of life, a positive perception of physical and mental health was observed, with more than 76% of favorable answers to items related to physical aspects, functional capacity, vitality, mental health, degree of pain, besides social and emotional aspects. No correlation was found, however, between 25OHD levels, quality of life and skin pigmentation level.
CONCLUSIONS: Due to the high prevalence of hypovitaminosis D observed in our population and in recent studies in Brazil, we might infer that hypovitaminosis D became a prominent epidemiological issue in our country. It may be suggested future public health interventions, such as food fortification with vitamin D, which would contribute to improve vitamin D status, reducing healthcare costs for the population.