

## A STRUCTURED HEALTH PROMOTION PROGRAM INCREASES HEALTH BEHAVIOR SELF-EFFICACY IN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN TAIWAN – A PILOT STUDY

*Shuya Chen<sup>1\*</sup>, Yu-Ching Lan<sup>2</sup>, Chi-Jung Chung<sup>2</sup>, Wen-Dien Chang<sup>3</sup>, Hui-Ting Yang<sup>4</sup>, Ya-Wen Hsu<sup>5</sup> (the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> authors are equally contributed)*

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Physical Therapy, China Medical University, Taichung, Taiwan*

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Health Risk Management, China Medical University, Taichung, Taiwan*

<sup>3</sup>*School of Sports Medicine, China Medical University, Taichung, Taiwan*

<sup>4</sup>*Department of Nutrition, China Medical University, Taichung, Taiwan*

<sup>5</sup>*Department of Hospital Health Care Administration, Chia Nan University of Pharmacy & Science, Tainan, Taiwan*

### ABSTRACT

**Background and Purpose:** Maintaining healthy behavior is a life-long work and should begin when one is young. Self-efficacy has been shown to be a critical mediator for behavior management for various pathological populations. However, it's unknown how self-efficacy influences adolescents' choice in maintaining health behavior. This pilot study examined the influence of a structured health promotion program on self-efficacy for university students in Taiwan.

**Materials/Methods:** A structured health promotion program emphasizing diet education and aerobic exercise was designed. After an elaborated introduction for the program, fifty students in a health-related class were asked to make decision on whether they would like to participate in the program. The intervention group kept daily diet log and received aerobic exercise while the control group kept the daily diet log only. The health behavior self-efficacy (HBSE) scale was measured before and after the intervention for all participants.

**Results:** Before the intervention, students who chose to take the program had significant lower HBSE (mean=3.52) than those who did not (mean=3.93). The HBSE of this group increased to the similar level (mean=3.66) with that of the control group (mean=3.55) after the completion of the program. Sub-analysis of the HBSE showed that the magnitude of pre-post change was: diet > exercise > mental health.

**Conclusions and Clinical Relevance:** The choices in maintaining health behavior for students with low self-efficacy were influenced at the moment the health promotion program was introduced. With the intervention focusing on the diet education and aerobic exercise, health behavior self-efficacy could be improved.