"Give Me Some Sugar!" The Diabetes Self Management Activities of African American Primary Caregivers

Author Information:
Authors List:
Presenting Author: Dana Carthron

Presenting Author: Dana L. Carthron

Address: 76 Starlifter
Fort Bragg, North Carolina 28307
United States
Ph: 501-960-8959
Fax:
Email: dcarthron@msn.com
Institution: University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences

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Introduction:
1 in 4 African-American (AA) women over 55 are diabetic. Approximately 480,000 women over 50 are primary caregivers of their grandchildren. It is estimated that at least 25% of AA primary caregiving grandmothers are diabetic. Clinical evidence suggests that AA primary caregiving grandmothers have less time for diabetes self management activities due to the responsibilities of caregiving, yet no studies have verified these clinical observations. The purpose of this study was to compare the diabetes self-management activities of AA primary caregiving grandmothers before and after the initiation of caregiving.

Method(s):
Participants were 34 AA primary caregiving grandmothers between the ages of 55-75. They were recruited as part of a larger study examining the impact of caregiving responsibilities on the diabetic health of AA primary caregiving grandmothers. Self management activities was measured using a questionnaire that focused on the frequency of home glucose monitoring, diet, exercise, daily foot exams, and eye exams. Grandmothers were asked about these activities before and after the initiation of caregiving.

Results:
The study is currently in progress with an estimated completion date of 31 Aug 2008. Data will be analyzed using an Independent T-Tests with Bonferroni correction.

Discussion:
This study will lay the foundation for a program of research devoted to assessing health needs of diabetic AA women raising their grandchildren. Additionally, it will aid in the development of tailored interventions to delay the progression of diabetes and diabetes related complications consequently increasing their longevity and quality of life.

Research Completed: Yes
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