Ahmad Taufik Jamil¹, Norazman Mohd Rosli¹, Aniza Ismail¹, Idayu Badilla Idris¹, Azahadi Omar²

¹ Department of Community Health, National University of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

² Institute of Public Health Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

ABSTRACT

This paper aims to determine the prevalence and risk factors associated with sedentary behavior among Malaysian adults. This study analyzed data from the National Health Morbidity Survey III, a cross-sectional nationwide study conducted in 2006. A total participants of 33 385 aged 18 and above were randomly recruited through multistage sampling. Sitting time data were collected using International Physical Activity Questionnaire (IPAQ). Overall prevalence of sedentary behavior was 23.5%. Higher proportion of sedentariness was seen among older (p<0.05), Chinese (p<0.05), divorcee/widower (p<0.05), those who were unemployed (p<0.05), those without formal education (p<0.05) and participants with diabetes (p<0.05), hypertension(p<0.05) and dyslipidaemia (p<0.05). In multivariable analysis, higher likelihood of being sedentary was observed among those with advancing age above 50 (OR between 1.20 and 2.92), Chinese (OR = 1.74, 95% CI: 1.58 - 1.91), unmarried (OR = 1.19, 95% CI: 1.08 - 1.30), unemployed (OR = 1.79, 95% CI: 1.62 - 1.96) and diabetes patients (OR = 1.20, 95% CI: 1.10 - 1.31). One-eighth of total day time was spent on sitting. Nearly one out of four Malaysian adults was considered sedentary. Age, ethnicity, occupational status, marital status and diabetes were likely to be predictors of being sedentary.

Keywords: National Health and Morbidity Survey, prevalence, Malaysia, sedentary lifestyle, sitting time.