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Cancer Risk Habits in Two Selected Chinese Communities
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Purpose of the study: This study was undertaken to describe the high risk habits, to elicit reasons and to access the communities’ knowledge and perception towards head and neck cancer.

Materials and Method: A total of 149 respondents in Pulau Ketam and 124 respondents in Makung aged 18 and above participated in the survey based on a structured questionnaire. In Pulau Ketam, Malaysia, the Chinese communities were selected through a multi-stage cluster sampling while in Makung, Taiwan, data were extracted from a nationwide survey which was conducted earlier.

Results: In Pulau Ketam, 32.2% of the respondents were smokers compared to 20.2% in Makung. The findings highlighted that the prevalence of alcohol drinking habit in Pulau Ketam was rather high being 40.3% compared to 12.1% in Makung. None of the respondents in Pulau Ketam had indulged in betel quid chewing habit while in Makung, 7.3% of the respondents practiced this habit. Significant associations were found with regards to cigarettes smoked daily, frequency and amount of alcoholic drinks consumed and combination of high risk habits (p<0.01). In Pulau Ketam, 75.8 % of the respondents had knowledge about head and neck cancer and socialising was cited as the main reason for practising these habits.

Conclusions: This study suggests that smoking and alcohol drinking habits are highly practiced among these two Chinese communities.