I. Introduction

Calcium intake plays an important role in the maintenance and development of bone mineral density and in the prevention of some diseases like osteoporosis and kidney calculi. Adequate lifelong calcium intake is essential in optimizing bone health. Nutrition knowledge is one of the key factors to improve eating behavior. Studies have found a positive association between nutritional knowledge (NK) and eating behavior. It is demonstrated that a better knowledge leads to better eating habits.

II. Aim

- Verify if calcium intake on health professionals is influenced by their nutritional knowledge.

III. Methods

This is a cross-sectional, descriptive, correlational and quantitative study. 103 Portuguese workers of the three main Hospitals of Oporto metropolitan area filled a two previously validated questionnaires: Food Frequency (FFQ) and the Portuguese version of the General Nutritional Knowledge Questionnaire (GNKQ) and one third questionnaire about Socio-demographic data. The relation between nutritional knowledge and calcium intake among health professionals was analyzed using Kruskal-Wallis test in the statistical software PASW 19.0. NKQ score was transformed into quartiles (0-5; 5-9; 9-15; 15-45), to access the range for calcium optimal ingestion dietary reference intakes were considered.

IV. Results

Individuals that had a calcium intake within DRI’s had a significantly higher GNK Total Score (mean rank = 58.09; p<0.010) and GNKQ Section 2 Score (mean rank = 57.75; p<0.033)

V. Conclusion

Professionals that presented calcium intake within the recommended values, had a higher score in GNKQ Total Score and GNKQ Section 2. These are coherent results, as the 2nd section is the one were knowledge about the content of calcium in dairy products is assessed. Past and actual studies show a significant relation between NK and dietary habits. The same seems to happen with the mineral calcium. It appears that NK influences calcium DRI’s compliance on health professionals.

Further researches are suggested once this is a pioneer study on the subject - nutritional knowledge and calcium intake.

References


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