

20.M. Oral session: Your diet, your health

Multi-Morbidity and Mediterranean Diet in the Cypriot population

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Introduction:

Knowledge about factors associated with multi-morbidity in a given population has important implications for prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and prognosis strategies.

Objectives:

To examine the association of Mediterranean diet with multi-morbidity in the adult general population of Cyprus.

Methods:

A representative sample of n = 1142 Cypriots over 18 years old was recruited during 2018-2019. Multi-morbidity was assessed using a validated questionnaire and diseases were classified according to the International Classification of Diseases, 11th Revision (ICD-11). Mediterranean diet was evaluated using the MedDiet score tool which included the weekly consumption of non-refined cereals, fruit, vegetables, legumes, potatoes, fish, meat and meat products, poultry, full fat dairy products, as well as olive oil and alcohol intake.

Results:

The average Mediterranean diet score was 15.5 ± 4.0 with males adhering more to the Mediterranean diet compared to females ($p < 0.001$). Being in the higher tertile of adherence to the Mediterranean diet was associated with lower odds of multi-morbidity at $\alpha = 0.10$, even after adjusting for age, gender, educational status, smoking habits, and physical activity (OR = 0.72, 95% CI: 0.49, 1.06, $p = 0.09$), compared to the lower tertile.

Conclusions:

To the best to our knowledge, this is the first study which provides evidence of an association between Mediterranean diet and multi-morbidity. Adherence to Mediterranean diet was associated with lower risk of multi-morbidity. Future prevention programs and practice guidelines in Cyprus and elsewhere should take into account the beneficial effects of a Mediterranean diet on multi-morbidity.

Key messages:

- This study provides the first evidence of an association between Mediterranean diet and multi-morbidity.
- health benefits in terms of multiple chronic diseases in an individual can be gained from Mediterranean diet pattern.