

A healthy eating score is inversely associated with depression in older adults: Results from the Chilean National Health Survey 2016-2017

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Abstract

Objective: To investigate the relationship of a healthy eating score with depression in Chilean older adults. **Design:** Cross-sectional study. **Setting:** Chilean older adults from the Chilean National Health Survey 2016-2017. Associations were analyzed using complex samples multivariable logistic regressions adjusted for: age, sex, socio-demographic, lifestyles (physical activity, smoking, alcohol consumption, and sleep duration), body mass index, and clinical conditions (hypertension, diabetes, hypercholesterolemia, and cardiovascular diseases). **Participants:** The number of participants were 2,031 (≥60y). The Composite International Diagnostic Interview-Short Form (CIDI-SF) was applied to establish the diagnosis of major depressive episode (MDE). Six healthy eating habits were considered to produce the healthy eating score (range: 0-12): consumption of seafood, whole grain, dairy, fruits, vegetables, and legumes. Participants were categorized according to their final scores as healthy (≥9), average (5 to 8), and unhealthy (≤4). **Results:** Participants with a healthy score had a higher educational level, physical activity, and regular sleep hours than participants with an average and unhealthiest healthy eating score. Participants classified in the healthiest healthy eating score had an inverse association with depression (OR: 0.28, 95%CI: 0.10-0.74). Food items that contributed the most to this association were legumes (15.2%) and seafood (12.7%). **Conclusion:** Participants classified in the healthiest healthy eating score, characterized by a high consumption of legumes and seafood, showed a lower risk for depression in a representative sample of Chilean population. © The Authors 2021.

Author keywords

aged; depression; Dietary pattern; health; Latin America