Abstract
The objective is to select the best anthropometric measurements to characterize a healthy elderly population. For that, 1030 healthy elderly persons (508 men and 522 women) living independently or in an institution (in both public and private homes) were enrolled for this population-based, cross-sectional study conducted from February 2004 to May 2005. Anthropometric measurements were made by the same investigator according to standard techniques of the WHO. Across several age groups, men were significantly heavier and taller than women whereas skinfold thicknesses were significantly greater in women than men. Through statistical analysis we were able to identify the variables providing most information and that could also best discriminate between sex, age and independent versus institutionalized persons: height, weight, one of the skinfold thickness measurements and mid-upper arm circumference. The number of age groups in both the male and female populations could be limited to three.

Keywords
Anthropometry, Healthy elderly, Statistical analysis.