Abstract

Background: Non-pharmacological measures are recommended for heart failure patients. However, most studies evaluate low sodium diet, while little is known about the effects of interventions to improve adherence and knowledge of patients about diet content. Objective: To evaluate if a global nutritional orientation could affect nutritional knowledge, adherence to food guidelines, anthropometrics and quality of life in heart failure patients. Methods: Forty six patients were randomized to intervention or control group. Both groups received usual care with medical and nursing staff; the intervention group received additional nutritional guidance about diet and its relationship with disease, sources of nutrients, and reduction of dietary sodium and fats. Enforcement of the nutritional guidance was performed after 4 weeks. Both groups were evaluated at baseline, and after 6 weeks and 6 months. Evaluations included anthropometric parameters, sodium excretion in 24-hour urine, dietary recall, nutrition knowledge and quality of life questionnaires. Results: Mean age of included patients was 58 ± 10 years and 70% were male. After 6 months of follow-up, the nutritional knowledge of intervention group increased compared to control (p < 0.05). Caloric, fat and sodium intake decreased in the intervention group compared to control (p < 0.05). No significant differences were seen in quality of life or anthropometric parameters. Conclusions: Nutritional orientation was effective to modify 1) knowledge about food and nutrition, and 2) quality of diet in outpatients with heart failure. Further studies are necessary to evaluate the benefits on quality of life and prognosis.

Keywords
Heart failure, Diet, Patient compliance, Knowledge.