Abstract

Background/Aims: The Food Consumption Survey, conducted for over 20 years by the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment (MAGRAMA), is the most reliable source of data to evaluate the food consumption and dietary patterns of Spain. The aim of the present article was to review the diet trends in Spain and its evolution. Food availability assessment per capita per day, which allows the calculation of energy and nutrient intake and comparison with the Recommended Nutrient Intakes for the Spanish population is described. In addition, different markers of the quality of the diet have been also evaluated.

Methods: The sample consisted of consumption and distribution data, obtained from the nationwide representative Food Consumption Survey for the period 2000-2012. A two-stage sampling method was applied, where in the first stage the units to be sampled were towns or local entities, and in the second stage households which were going to be part of the final sample from those entities were selected. Units consisted of towns or local entities in the national territory. The data allowed the calculation of energy and nutrient intakes, using the Food Composition Tables (Moreiras et al, 2013). The quality of the diet was also evaluated: the adequacy of the diet in meeting the recommended intakes for energy and nutrients; energy profile; dietary fat quality; dietary protein quality; nutrient density; Mediterranean diet adequacy indices. The present data were compared with previous data obtained by our research group in 1964, 1981 and 1991. Results: Using the most recent data, average intake comprised: milk and derivatives (356 g/person/day), fruits (323 g/person/day), vegetables and greens (339 g/ person/day), cereals and derivatives (197 g/person/day), meat and meat products (181 g/day), fish (88,6 g/person/ day), oils and fats (41,6 g/person/day), sugar and derivatives (25,6 g/person/day), eggs (27,1 g/person/day), legumes (13,9 g/person/day) . There was also a high consumption of non-alcoholic beverages (437 g/person/day) and decreasing for alcoholic beverages (192 g/person/day) compared to previous surveys. In consequence, meat and meat product consumption was higher than the recommendations, whereas for cereals and their derivatives, vegetables and greens, fruit, and legumes and pulses, consumption was below recommendations for the Spanish population (GRUNUMUR, 2004; SENC, 2007). Some staple and traditional Mediterranean foods (bread, potatoes and olive oil) showed a dramatic decline when compared to data from Household Budget Surveys in 1964 data. Energy intake showed a marked decline when compared to the 1960's mean consumption, and show marked differences for food groups contributors. Energy profile shows too much coming from lipids vs carbohydrates and slightly higher from proteins. Conclusion: Food consumption patterns in Spain and energy and nutrient intakes have changed markedly in the last forty years, differing somewhat at present from the traditional and healthy Mediterranean Diet.
Keywords
Food consumption survey, Food availability, Dietary intake, Energy profiles, Diet quality, Mediterranean diet.