CHARACTERIZATION OF HABITUAL DIETARY PROTEIN INTAKE AMONG DUTCH PHYSICALLY ACTIVE ELDERLY

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Rationale: Given the rapidly aging population and the fact that adequate protein intake is a key factor in the prevention and treatment of sarcopenia, insights in habitual dietary protein intake are important in various groups of the elderly. The objective of this study was to gain more insight in habitual dietary protein intake and the contribution of several protein containing food groups in physically active elderly.

Methods: Data were derived from 1005 Dutch elderly subjects aged ≥ 65 years who participated in the Nijmegen Exercise Study 2015 and completed two online questionnaires. Subjects filled out a questionnaire about demographics, anthropometrics and physical activity. Additionally, an online validated food frequency questionnaire was used to estimate habitual dietary intake. The Dutch Food Composition database of 2010 was used to calculate energy and protein intake and to categorize food groups. Results are expressed as mean ± SD or as median (interquartile range (IQR)).

Results: Participants (708 men, 297 women; 70 ± 4 years; 24.8 ± 2.9 kg/m²) were physically active for 875 (579-1260) MET-minutes per day. Mean energy intake was 9.1 ± 2.8 MJ/d and protein accounted for 15 ± 2 % of total energy intake. Mean protein intake was 1.1 ± 0.4 g/kg/d, 80% of the participants had an intake ≥ 0.8 g/kg/d and 35% ≥ 1.2 g/kg/d. The food group meat, meat products and poultry was the most dominant protein source and contributed for 19% (13-26) to the total protein intake. This was followed by bread (17% (13-23)), milk and milk products (14% (9-20)), and cheese (9% (5-15)).

Conclusion: Dutch physically active elderly had a mean dietary protein intake of 1.1 g/kg/d, whereas only 35% of the study population met the recommended intake of ≥ 1.2 g/kg/d. The main sources for protein intake were meat, bread, milk and cheese. This information can be used to optimize the habitual diet in elderly people with low protein intake.

Disclosure of Interest: None Declared

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