



# HEALTHY EATING WITH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES: A MORE COMPLEX ISSUE THAN YOUR OWN CONSUMPTION

ALIMENTACIÓN SALUDABLE CON FRUTAS Y VERDURAS: UN TEMA MÁS COMPLEJO QUE SU PROPIO CONSUMO

Joana M. Magallanes-Cabrera<sup>1,2,a</sup>

## Mr. Editor

In the article published by Huamancayo-Espíritu and Pérez-Cárdenas<sup>(1)</sup> on the consumption of fruits and vegetables in medical students, the authors estimated the prevalence of low consumption of fruits and vegetables of 60.1% in a sample of 371 students. The most frequent reasons found were the difficulty of obtaining them in the university cafeterias, insufficient time for their selection, purchase, and preparation, and the fact of living with a parent who is in charge of their food. The second being the only associated factor, and the last being a protective factor. The study presents many strengths, including the importance of the thematic axis that it develops: healthy lifestyles are one of the great determinants of health, highlighting that one in every 5 deaths in the world is associated with unhealthy eating<sup>(2)</sup>.

However, their analysis allows finding certain limitations and biases that the authors did not mention in the discussion. In the first place, the variable of "consumption of fruits and vegetables" could be better defined, since, unlike fruits, vegetables are hardly counted in units, here certain portions could be defined and perhaps made independent.

Regarding the methodological design, as it is cross-sectional and does not have a baseline measure, it is difficult to find causality with the factors mentioned since those included in the study are linked to the status of being a university student, however, It is known that diet is related to many other factors, not necessarily linked to the university setting.

Already within the specific consumption of fruits and vegetables, other important factors can be found like physical exercise, education, alcohol consumption, exposure to unhealthy food inside and outside the university, among others, which were not included in the study<sup>(3)</sup>. In addition, in studies such as that of Adrogué<sup>(3)</sup>, it was found that these factors may be different depending on gender. Therefore, when conducting the multivariate study, sociodemographic factors should also be taken into account for the multivariate analysis.

Finally, although in the discussion it is mentioned that it is possible that the reality of the students is similar in other houses of study, we must remember that the university in which the study belongs to is in the Peruvian highlands and is public. It is difficult to estimate the rest of the universities at the national level, since within the educational system we have private and public universities. These universities territorially obey their natural regions, where the food profile varies with height<sup>(4)</sup>, so there are many factors internal and external that could influence this behavior.

In conclusion, the study develops a topic with great current relevance, with certain aspects to improve, but we consider that it is a great basis for conducting the multicenter study around this thematic axis, which can be useful for decision-making in the study houses of future doctors in our country.

<sup>1</sup> Universidad César Vallejo, Trujillo-Perú.

<sup>2</sup> Federación Internacional de Asociaciones de Estudiantes de Medicina – Universidad César Vallejo (IFMSA UCV), Trujillo - Perú.

<sup>a</sup> Medical Student.

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**Correspondence:** Joana Mabel Magallanes-Cabrera.

**Address:** Avenida Víctor Larco 1770, Trujillo - Perú

**Telephone number:** 938208471

**E-mail:** joana05@live.com

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