

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



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Professor Doutor Pedro Rodrigues

ijup@reit.up.pt

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21169 | Associated factors related to self-perception of health status among University of Porto students

*Nova, Lúcia, Faculdade de Ciências da Nutrição e Alimentação da Universidade do Porto, Portugal
Coelho, Beatriz Cidade, Faculdade de Ciências da Nutrição e Alimentação da Universidade do Porto, Portugal*

*Póinhos, Rui, Faculdade de Ciências da Nutrição e Alimentação da Universidade do Porto, Portugal
Oliveira, Bruno, Faculdade de Ciências da Nutrição e Alimentação da Universidade do Porto, Portugal*

*Rocha, Ada, Faculdade de Ciências da Nutrição e Alimentação da Universidade do Porto, Portugal
Afonso, Cláudia, Faculdade de Ciências da Nutrição e Alimentação da Universidade do Porto, Instituto de Saúde Pública da Universidade do Porto, Portugal*

Abstract

Unhealthy eating patterns are usually prevalent in university contexts. Students' health status self-perception may be both cause and consequence of eating habits and their determinants. Despite their higher knowledge, nutrition students don't necessarily have better eating habits. The aim was to relate being or not a nutrition student and food choice determinants with U.Porto students' self-perception of health status. A convenience sample of 173 students (83.2% females) aged 18 years or above (median age = 22,5 years old) completed an online questionnaire including sociodemographic and academic characteristics, self-perception of health status and food choice determinants. Binary logistic regression models were used to predict self-perception of health status based on the other characteristics. The main factors that influence food consumption were 'habit or routine' (29.1%), 'the attempt to carry out a healthy diet' (22.7%), 'taste of foods' (14.5%) and 'convenience in the preparation of foods' (13.4%). FCNAUP students (56.6% of total) are more likely to self-perceive as healthier (OR: 2.525, 95% CI: 1.236-5.155). Students who selected 'the attempt to carry out a healthy diet' as their major food choice determinant are more likely to self-perceive as healthier (OR: 2.897, 95% CI: 2.688-12.204), while those who selected 'convenience' (OR: 0.314, 95% CI: 0.098-1.008), 'habit or routine' (OR: 0.394, 95% CI: 0.144-1.074) or 'the taste of foods' (OR: 0.362, 95% CI: 0.115-1.143) are less likely to self-perceive as healthier. The relationships between food choice determinants and self-perception of health status may help to conduct health interventions for U.Porto students, as they allow focusing on both general (health) and specific (food) features, and different motivation sources. Nutrition students' self-perception of a better health status must be valorised considering objective health measures.

Keywords: health status; food choices; food consumption; public health; university students.