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22067 | Determinants of food consumption by University students

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Introduction: The beginning of university is considered a risk period for the development of inadequate eating habits. It is important to develop public health strategies that help prevent and solve this problem. The adhesion to healthy lifestyles at a young age plays a significant role in preventing disease and promoting health throughout an individual's life cycle. **Aim:** In this sense, the present study aimed to study determinants of food choice and the relationship between the level of education (bachelor ou higher). **Methodology:** This cross-sectional study, include 421 (328 females) students from Porto University, who completed an online questionnaire with sociodemographic characteristics, self-perceived health, determinants of food choice, where lunch is consumed, frequency of SASUP canteen use, and satisfaction of the food/meals provided by the university. **Results:** Only 24,8% of undergraduate students and 12,3% of post-graduate students considered "having a healthy diet" as the main determinant of food choice ($p=0,021$). Education level (bachelor or higher than) was not significantly associated with the frequency of use the SASUP canteen ($p=0,923$). Regarding self-perception of health, there were no significant differences between undergraduate and post-graduate students ($p=0,900$). The frequency of canteen use was not significantly associated with the perception of health ($p=0,555$). **Conclusions:** Considering "having a healthy diet" as the main determinant of food choice was the only factor associated with the education level. This information will help in the definition of strategies that will help us promote the adoption of better eating habits among university students.

Keywords: Nutrition, University, Canteen, Undergraduate, Post-Graduate, Perception of Health, Healthy Diet.