Proceedings of the Nutrition Society (2013), **72 (OCE4)**, E207 doi:10.1017/S0029665113002322

Summer Meeting, 15–18 July 2013, Nutrition and healthy ageing

Development of a web-based recipe database for use in promotion of the Mediterranean diet among older adults in the UK

J. Lara, H. Hearth and J. C. Mathers

Human Nutrition Research Centre, Institute for Ageing and Health, Newcastle University, Biomedical Research Building, Campus for Ageing and Vitality. . Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE4 5PL, UK

The Mediterranean Diet (MD) describes a dietary pattern which is characterised by higher intakes of vegetables, fruits, legumes, cereals, fish and a moderate intake of red wine during meals. There is now strong evidence suggesting that adopting a MD is associated with lower risk of a wide range of ageing-related diseases including cardiovascular disease, cancer and Alzheimer's disease. Interventions promoting the MD are likely to benefit from tools facilitating the "adoption process" e.g. a website providing dataset of recipes, meals, and/or menus. Preparation time, cooking abilities, relative cost and season of the year, are important factors to consider when developing such a website.

We developed and tested for usability and acceptability, a MD recipe website containing 150 recipes. Twenty adults took part in this study. After an initial training session on the website and on the characteristics and health benefits of the MD, participants were encouraged to use the website for 2 weeks and to use as many recipes as possible. Participants were also encouraged to submit to the website their own recipes. After 2 weeks participants returned for an assessment session in which they assessed the acceptability of the website using a standardised questionnaire[1], and for group feedback discussion about the users' experience.

The table shows the general characteristics of participants, the score for acceptability of the website, and frequency of use during the period of study. The MD website was highly acceptable and user-friendly. Acceptability scores did not differ significantly by gender or BMI. Participants were actively engaged with using the website. Eighty-five per cent of the participants submitted recipes with 61 new recipes being submitted during the two weeks.

	All (n = 20)		Women (n = 13)		Men (n = 7)		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	P
Age (yrs)	66	9	64	8	71	9	0.067
BMI (kg/m^2)	25.4	3.7	25.6	3.8	26.8	3.6	0.207
Website acceptability questionnaire score	8.4	1.3	8.1	1.5	8.9	0.7	0.393
Website use (recipes /2 weeks)	6.1	2.5	5.9	2.1	6.1	3.3	0.757

p-values correspond to men and women comparisons.

Overall, this short term study shows that a novel MD recipe website is an acceptable and useful tool for interventions promoting this dietary pattern among older adults in the UK.

This work is part of the LiveWell project which is funded by the Lifelong Health and Wellbeing Cross-Council Programme initiative in partnership with the UK Health Department: The LLHW Funding Partners are: Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council, Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, Economic and Social Research Council, Medical Research Council, Chief Scientist Office of the Scottish Government Health Directorates, National Institute for Health Research /The Department of Health, The Health and Social Care Research & Development of the Public Health Agency (Northern Ireland), and Wales Office of Research and Development for Health and Social Care, Welsh Assembly Government.

1. Adams RG, White AS & Ceylan E. (2009) An acceptability predictor for websites. In: Universal access in human-computer interaction. Applications and services. Lecture Notes in Computer Science. 5616. Springer Berlin, pp. 628–634.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0029665113002322 Published online by Cambridge University Press