

ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR RELATED TO GERIATRIC NUTRITION IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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The world population is in a constant process of aging. The percentage of people aged 65 and older was about 9% in 2020 and is estimated to increase to 16% by 2050. Statistics show that the number of older persons in the Republic of Moldova is also growing every year, at the beginning of 2021, the population aging rate was 22.5%, which is 3.3% higher than in 2017 [1].

Nutrition plays a preventive role and is considered a key component of the quality of life. The nutrition peculiarities of older persons include: eating strictly at the same time and limiting the amount of food intake, while the consumed food should be nourishing, easily digestible, and rich in vitamins and minerals. The aging of the body is accompanied by a gradual decrease in the intensity of metabolism, for this reason, a reduction in the number of consumed calories is required.

As part of a sociological survey conducted between April and May 2022, it was found that the daily diet of the population of the Republic of Moldova undergoes certain changes with age. The comparative analysis of the preferences in choosing certain types of food products of representatives of different age groups showed that the diet of citizens of the Republic of Moldova over the age of 60 is characterized by reduced consumption of sugary drinks, mineral water, coffee, milk, and alcoholic beverages, while the daily consumption of cereals increases. At the same time, many people cannot refuse the consumption of confectionery and desserts, various pickles, and gastronomy products, but the overall consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables is declining. According to the survey data, positive trends are associated more with possible acquired diseases, rather than with a rational approach to choosing suitable foods. The diet of the older age group, although it includes a sufficient amount of animal protein, is characterized by a high content of saturated fatty acids. This may also be due to the fact that the majority of respondents (56.9%) have a limited income, therefore, they are restricted in their choice of certain food products.

Thus, the diet of only 29.1% of people aged 60 and over, due to accumulated diseases, undergoes forced, rather than special changes towards a more balanced diet. The culture of adherence to a balanced diet depending on age is not developed in the Republic of Moldova, as well as there is no special group of geriatric products in general access. As the main measures to improve the quality of life of the local aged citizens, it is recommended to promote geriatric nutrition by informing the population about special diets, as well as highlighting suitable foods with special labeling.

Keywords: the elderly population, sociological survey, geriatric products, balanced ration

References

1. The National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova © 2022. Available: <https://statistica.gov.md/newsview.php?l=en&id=6767&idc=168>

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