



## Fruit and vegetable consumption behavior in Ecuadorian workers

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Low fruit and vegetable (F&V) consumption is linked with poor health and increase risk of non communicable diseases (NCD) such as: type 2 diabetes, ischemic heart disease and stroke. An estimated 6·7 million deaths worldwide were attributed to insufficient fruit and vegetable consumption in 2010<sup>(1)</sup>. NCD (diabetes mellitus, cardiovascular disease, stroke and cancer) are main causes of death in Ecuadorian adults. The average F&V consumption in Ecuadorian population does not accomplish with the World Health Organization (WHO) F&V consumption recommendation of 400 g/day<sup>(2)</sup>. Low F&V consumption prevalence and F&V consumption behavior are unknown in Ecuadorian workers.

The purpose of this study is twofold: to determine the prevalence of low F&V consumption and to establish the relationship between Body Mass Index (BMI), age, sex and education with F&V consumption Stage of Change (SOC) in Ecuadorian workers in 2006.

In order to address the above aims, a medical story with the following information was collected in 917 private employees (663 men and 254 women) with 18–64 years: 1. Sociodemographic information; 2. BMI; 3. F&V consumption SOC behaviors were measured according to the Trans Theoretical Model; 4. Descriptive statistics, chi-squared test and factorial analysis of multiple correspondences were used.

Low F&V consumption prevalence was 87·9%. The 12% of subjects who accomplish WHO F&V consumption recommendation of 400 g/day ate daily an average of 2·1 fruit and 1·3 vegetable portions. The 83% of subjects who accomplished WHO F&V consumption recommendation were classified in SOC maintenance. Whereas, the majority of subjects who did not accomplish WHO F&V intake recommendations were classified in low F&V SOC (pre contemplation and contemplation). Women ate more F&V than men. The F&V consumption was higher in subjects with high education levels. Similar findings were reported by WHO and Bandoni R.<sup>(3,4)</sup>. The F&V consumption was not associated with BMI.

High prevalence of low F&V intake was found in this study. The F&V consumption SOC were associated with F&V consumption. Research findings were used for designing and implementing a life style promotion program at workplace under research, which included counselling for increasing F&V consumption.

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