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# Dietary analysis and patterns of nutritional supplement use in normal and age-related macular disease affected subjects: a prospective cross-sectional study

Hannah Bartlett  and Frank Eperjesi 

Neurosciences Research Institute, Aston University, Birmingham, B4 7ET, UK

 author email  corresponding author email

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## Abstract

### Background

Poor diet is thought to be a risk factor for many diseases, including age-related macular disease (ARMD), which is the leading cause of blind registration in those aged over 60 years in the developed world. The aims of this study were 1) to evaluate the dietary food intake of three subject groups: participants under the age of 50 years without ARMD (U50), participants over the age of 50 years without ARMD (O50), and participants with ARMD (AMD), and 2) to obtain information on nutritional supplement usage.

### Methods

A prospective cross-sectional study designed in a clinical practice setting. Seventy-four participants were divided into three groups: U50; 20 participants aged < 50 years, from 21 to 40 (mean  $\pm$  SD, 37.7  $\pm$  10.1 years), O50; 27 participants aged > 50 years, from 52 to 77 (62.7  $\pm$  6.8 years), and ARMD; 27 participants aged > 50 years with ARMD, from 55 to 79 (66.0  $\pm$  5.8 years). Participants were issued with a three-day food diary, and were also asked to provide details of any daily nutritional supplements. The diaries were analysed using FoodBase 2000 software. Data were input by one investigator and statistically analysed using Microsoft Excel for Microsoft Windows XP software, employing unpaired t-tests.

### Results

Group O50 consumed significantly more vitamin C ( $t = 3.049$ ,  $p = 0.005$ ) and significantly more fibre ( $t = 2.107$ ,  $p = 0.041$ ) than group U50. Group ARMD consumed significantly more protein ( $t = 3.487$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ) and zinc ( $t = 2.252$ ,  $p = 0.029$ ) than group O50. The ARMD group consumed the highest percentage of specific ocular health supplements and the U50 group consumed the most multivitamins.

### Conclusions

We did not detect a deficiency of any specific nutrient in the diets of those with ARMD compared with age- and gender-

matched controls. ARMD patients may be aware of research into use of nutritional supplementation to prevent progression of their condition.

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