

Table 3 Dietary habits of the elderly respondents by sex

| Dietary habit | Males (n = 982) | | Females (n = 1045) | | Total | P-value |
|---|--------------------|------|-----------------------|------|-------|---------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | % | |
| Meals eaten (per day) | | | | | | |
| 1 | 15 | 1.5 | 11 | 1.0 | 1.3 | NS |
| 2 | 67 | 6.8 | 81 | 7.8 | 7.3 | |
| 3 | 900 | 91.6 | 953 | 91.2 | 91.4 | |
| Noticed change in appetite | | | | | | |
| Yes | 265 | 27.3 | 348 | 33.5 | 30.5 | 0.003 |
| Reasons for change in appetite | | | | | | |
| Sickness | 147 | 15.1 | 209 | 20.1 | 17.7 | |
| Taking medicine | 26 | 2.7 | 24 | 2.3 | 2.5 | |
| Death of someone close | 3 | 0.3 | 13 | 1.3 | 0.8 | |
| No apparent reason | 116 | 11.9 | 135 | 13.0 | 12.5 | |
| Adequate consumption of foods(per week) | | | | | | |
| Fish/meat/chicken | 559 | 58.4 | 611 | 59.6 | 59.0 | NS |
| Cereals | 797 | 83.0 | 853 | 83.7 | 83.4 | NS |
| Vegetables | 104 | 10.9 | 119 | 11.8 | 11.4 | NS |
| Fruits | 810 | 83.7 | 885 | 86.2 | 85.0 | NS |
| Consumption of sweets (times per week) | | | | | | |
| 0 | 315 | 38.4 | 393 | 44.6 | 41.6 | 0.01 |
| 1-3 | 506 | 61.6 | 489 | 55.4 | 58.4 | |
| Consumption of extra salt in diet | 194 | 19.9 | 197 | 19.0 | 19.4 | NS |
| Consumption of fluids* (mL per day) | | | | | | |
| Inadequate | 228 | 23.3 | 357 | 34.4 | 29.0 | < 0.001 |
| Adequate | 749 | 76.7 | 680 | 65.6 | 71.0 | |
| Consumption of milk & milk products (times per week) | | | | | | |
| Inadequate | 796 | 81.2 | 896 | 85.9 | 83.6 | 0.004 |
| Adequate | 184 | 18.8 | 147 | 14.1 | 16.4 | |
| Types of milk & milk products consumed | | | | | | |
| Low fat/skimmed | 534 | 59.1 | 591 | 63.2 | 61.2 | NS |
| Full fat | 370 | 40.9 | 344 | 36.8 | 38.8 | |
| Take vitamin/mineral supplements | | | | | | |
| | 83 | 8.6 | 104 | 10.0 | 9.3 | NS |
| Follow diet regimen | | | | | | |
| Restrict fat and cholesterol | 123 | 12.6 | 160 | 15.4 | 14.0 | < 0.001 |
| Restrict sugar | 94 | 9.6 | 125 | 12.0 | 10.9 | |
| Restrict salt | 84 | 8.6 | 130 | 12.5 | 10.6 | |
| Eat more iron-containing foods | 6 | 0.6 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.3 | |
| Eat more fibre | 7 | 0.7 | 7 | 0.7 | 0.7 | |

Totals do not add up to sample size due to missing data; *water, milk, laban, juices, other drinks; NS = not significant.