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Trends and determinants of change in compliance to dietary guidelines in a Swiss community-dwelling sample.

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Abstract

Adherence to dietary guidelines is associated with significantly better health outcomes. Studies across the world shows that compliance with the guidelines was low, but data in Switzerland are lacking. Hence, we aimed to assess the 5-year trends in dietary compliance regarding food guidelines in Switzerland in a prospective, population-based observational study. Data from 2882 participants (1591 women, 35-75 years), from the first (2009-2012) and second (2014-2017) follow-up. Dietary intake was assessed using a validated food frequency questionnaire. Compliance with the guidelines of the Swiss society of nutrition was assessed at baseline and 5.5 years afterwards. Prevalence rates for compliance were calculated using the exact Poisson method. Factors associated with changes in compliance (never, shifter or maintainer) were assessed by multinomial logistic regression using "Never compliers" as reference. Overall, improvements in compliance to fruits (42.4% to 45.1%) vegetables (6.9% to 8.6%) and fish (66.6% to 60.5%) were found, while compliance to meat decreased (61.1% to 58.5%). The prevalence of participants complying with at least three dietary recommendations did not change (24.1% to 25.2%). During follow-up, only 11.6% of participants maintained compliance to at least three dietary recommendations, and 62.4% never managed to comply. Female gender and older age were associated with maintaining compliance during the two study periods. In conclusion, compliance with dietary guidelines is a dynamic status, and only a small fraction of the population achieves sustained compliance with at least three guidelines. Almost two thirds of the population never achieve compliance with three guidelines.

KEYWORDS: Dietary guidelines; Epidemiology; Prospective study; Public health; Switzerland