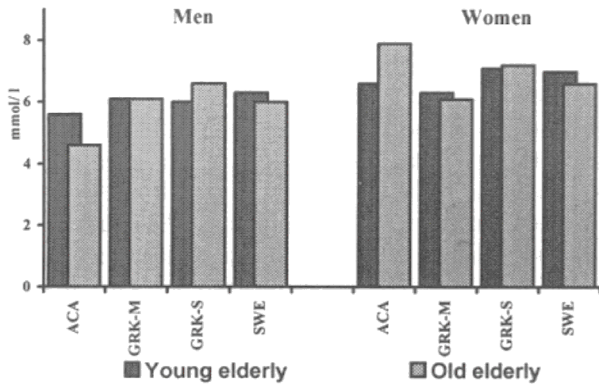


Figure 19. Average total serum cholesterol, by study community, age group and gender



The Anglo-Celtic young elderly men had the lowest average total serum cholesterol (5.8mmol/ l) compared to the other Caucasian communities (6 to 6.5mmol/ l). Cholesterol values tended to be higher amongst the old elderly (Figure 19).

Discussion

The first part of the IUNS study has provided us with a unique data set on health, dietary patterns, social activity and lifestyle in 13 disparate communities. The most striking differences in health profiles and food intake patterns are seen between Caucasian and Asian communities, rather than between individual communities.

Notwithstanding the differences in cultural or ethnic background, the well-being is comparable and high across all elderly communities. In the main, whatever their circumstances, disability or disease profile, elderly people regarded themselves as happy. Social network and activity levels appeared to account best for a sense of well-being in those communities where we were able to examine the relationships. It would seem that elderly people do not need to have a sense of good health to feel happy. The different dietary methods used on Caucasian elderly and Asian elderly should be taken into account when interpreting the food intake data (see Methods). The use of 24-hour recall in Chinese and Japanese communities may result in underestimation of food intake, when compared to data obtained with food frequency questionnaires in the Caucasian communities. The findings described so far will be used in further cross-sectional analyses on the role of differences in dietary habits and nutrition on health, taking into account living habits and lifestyle. The results allow identification of nutritional risk profiles in the elderly, of which the importance and impact on health should be confirmed in a follow-up study. Prospective studies linking dietary intake of nutrients with nutritional status, health, and especially functional capacity, will provide a better understanding of the nutritional requirements of the elderly and the establishment of RDAs and dietary guide-lines for the various subsets of older populations of different ethnicities.

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The IUNS cross-cultural study of "Food Habits In Later Life"-- an overview of key findings

Wahlqvist ML, Hsu-Hage BH-H, Kouris-Blazos A, Lukito W and IUNS study investigators:

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國際營養科學聯合會 (IUNS) 的晚年飲食習慣的跨文化研究

—— 主要發現的評論 ——

摘要

自 1986 年世界衛生組織 (WHO) 在印度海德拉巴 (Hyderabad) 舉行專題討論會後，人們要求了解老年人營養與健康的問題更加迫切。Gary Andrew 博士代表 WHO 在 1986 年發表了一份西太平洋老年人的社會與健康狀況的研究。儘管跨文化比較困難不少，但在社會因素和自覺健康指標方面已發現有重大差異，這些差異說明了有必要在更大的國際範圍內進行進一步的跨文化研究。IUNS 委員會在「營養與益壽」這個問題上，已開始用社會——人類學的方法去研究跨文化方面的營養與健康的關係，因而誕生了一個「晚年飲食習慣」的研究項目。參加這個科研項目的團體不強調生物樣本的收集，只集中研究食物文化與健康的關係，是非侵害性的。從 1988—1992 年研究了澳大利亞、中國、希臘、日本、菲律賓和瑞典等國家的 13 個老年社會，將結果匯集成書，該書把老年人的跨文化研究收集在一起，同時作為 IUNS 研究項目，考慮食物與健康的關係。這些研究包括歐洲老年人 (EC SENECA) 的研究，一個由北京營養與衛生研究所進行的，包括 6 個華人社會的獨特食物模式的研究，一個新西蘭——澳大利亞兩個社會的研究和一個中美洲的研究。IUNS 研究本身有其生態學調查及與此有關的局限性的特徵，但將研究重點集中在人種學和人類學上會體現了一種優勢，因為在幾個人種中得到的結果要比任何單一人種的結果好得多，IUNS 研究在可變因素研究的範圍內是很好的，其中一些被研究的社區將繼續追蹤並獲得利益。