



# ARCHIVOS DE LA SOCIEDAD ESPAÑOLA DE OFTALMOLOGÍA

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## Original article

# Mediterranean diet adherence by patients with primary open angle glaucoma<sup>☆</sup>

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### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history:

Received 13 August 2016

Accepted 9 December 2016

Available online xxx

#### Keywords:

Primary open angle glaucoma

Mediterranean diet

Nutrition

### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** To study the adherence to the Mediterranean diet in patients affected by primary open angle glaucoma (POAG).

**Materials and methods:** An observational study was conducted to assess the adherence to the Mediterranean diet in patients affected by POAG, and who attended the Ophthalmology Department of the Canary Islands University Hospital. The study included completing a 14-item questionnaire validated by the PREDIMED Study, in person or by telephone.

**Results:** A total of 100 questionnaires were completed successfully by 50 males and 50 females. The mean age was 69.58 years for the males and 67.42 years for women. The men had more comorbidities than women (tobacco 14 vs. 3%), arterial hypertension, and diabetes (30 vs. 28%, and 16 vs. 6%, respectively). Adherence to the Mediterranean diet in males, was low in 9 patients (18%), moderate in 37 (74%), and high in 4 (8%) cases. In women adherence was low in 14 patients (28%), moderate in 34 (68%), and high in 2 (6%) cases. The overall adhesion to the Mediterranean diet is low in 23%, moderate in 71% and high in 6% of the cases.

**Conclusion:** Patients who are affected by POAG have moderate adherence to the Mediterranean diet.

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<sup>☆</sup> Please cite this article as: Abreu-Reyes JA, Álvarez-Luis D, Arteaga-Hernández V, Sánchez-Mendez M, Abreu-González R. Adherencia a la dieta mediterránea en pacientes afectados de glaucoma primario de ángulo abierto. Arch Soc Esp Oftalmol. 2017. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.oftal.2016.12.002>

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## Adherencia a la dieta mediterránea en pacientes afectados de glaucoma primario de ángulo abierto

### RESUMEN

#### Palabras clave:

Glaucoma primario de ángulo abierto  
Dieta mediterránea  
Nutrición

**Objetivo:** Estudiar la adherencia a la dieta mediterránea (dM) en pacientes diagnosticados de glaucoma primario de ángulo abierto (GPAA).

**Material y métodos:** Se realizó un estudio observacional para valorar la adherencia a la dM en los pacientes diagnosticados de GPAA que acuden a la consulta del Servicio de Oftalmología del Complejo Hospitalario Universitario de Canarias. Consistió en la realización de una encuesta —personal o telefónica—, compuesta de 14 ítems validados por el estudio PREDIMED.

**Resultados:** Se encuestó a 100 pacientes, 50 hombres y 50 mujeres. El grupo de los hombres tenía una edad media de 69,58 años y el de las mujeres, de 67,42 años. Los hombres presentaban mayores comorbilidades que las mujeres (tabaco 28 vs. 6%), hipertensión arterial (60 vs. 56%), diabetes (32 vs. 12%). La adherencia a la dM en hombres fue baja en 9 pacientes (18%), moderada en 37 pacientes (74%) y alta en 4 pacientes (8%). En las mujeres la adherencia a la dM fue baja en 14 pacientes (28%), media en 34 pacientes (68%) y alta en 2 pacientes (6%). El total de adherencia a la dM de los pacientes es baja en el 23%, moderada en el 71% y alta en el 6%.

**Conclusiones:** Los pacientes diagnosticados de GPAA en nuestra área de atención sanitaria presentan en su mayoría una adherencia moderada a la dM. El papel del facultativo es importante y debe mejorar, para proporcionar la información adecuada sobre la dM y sus beneficios respecto al GPAA.

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## Introduction

Primary open angle glaucoma (POAG) is the type of glaucoma that has the highest prevalence in the general population (2.1%), and constitutes the second cause of blindness in industrialized countries.<sup>1</sup>

Several factors have been identified in glaucomatous neurodegeneration, but at present IOP increase is the main treatable risk factor.<sup>2</sup> In what concerns diet, it has been described that fruits and greens exhibit a protective effect as regards the risk of developing glaucoma, and a high intake of greenleaf vegetables, fruits and fruit juices in general is recommended as the antioxidant properties of these foods are regarded as the cause of said protection.<sup>3,4</sup>

The Mediterranean diet (Md) is based on the idealization of some diet patterns in Mediterranean countries. Md is regarded as balanced and healthy and able to provide optimum nutritional support.<sup>5</sup> Recently, several publications relate compliance with Md to diminished cardiovascular risk factors.<sup>6,7</sup>

The objective of this study is to assess compliance with Md by patients with POAG in the authors' population area as well as analyzing its relationship with gender, education level and cardiovascular risk.

## Material and method

An observational study was carried out to assess compliance with Md by patients diagnosed with POAG who visited the Ophthalmology Dept. of the University Hospital Complex of the Canary Islands (Tenerife, Spain). The reference

population of this hospital is the northern area of Tenerife (400,000 inhabitants).

The study consisted in a survey that was carried out through a personal or telephone interview comprising 14 items validated by the Prevention through Mediterranean Diet (PREDIMED) study. The survey also included questions about the epidemiological and cardiovascular characteristics of participants (Fig. 1). The sample size was 100 surveys corresponding to 100 patients, 50 males and 50 females. One patient was excluded due to withholding informed consent for the survey. The study was carried out from January to March 2016.

The results of the study were compared on the basis of the scores obtained according to the following scale: a score of 0–6 (low compliance), 7–10 (moderate compliance), 11–14 (high compliance).

The study was authorized by the Clinic Research Ethical Committee of the University Hospital Complex of the Canary Islands and was in accordance with the Helsinki declaration criteria.

The scores obtained by each patient according to the responses given were statistically analyzed with Microsoft Excel (Microsoft Office Professional 2016, Redmond, WA, USA), one Chi square test and one Mann–Whitney U test. Several analyses were carried out at the Research Unit of said University Hospital Complex.

## Results

### Characteristics of the sample

Overall, 100 glaucomatous patients who completed the survey were identified. In what concerns gender, 50% of patients were

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