

Diet-based mitigation may be used hand in hand with vaccination against COVID-19

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The links between diet-related diseases and COVID-19 are now widely accepted based on scientific evidence. In this regard, obesity has been identified by the CDC as a strong risk factor for severe COVID-19

illness. Still scientists trying to understand why COVID19 had mild symptoms in some and much more severe symptoms in others.

Vaccination against COVID19 is essential. The vaccines are proven to be safe and effective and should be promoted as the first line of defense. However, attention to the preventative effect of [diet](#)-related mitigations is largely missing. As a mitigating factor, diet impact on COVID19 should be carefully explored.

A study led by the Centro Universitario de la Costa, Department of Medical Sciences, Universidad de Guadalajara, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, has now explored the association between severity of COVID-19 symptoms and habitual food intake in adult outpatients. The study was conducted on 236 patients with suspected COVID-19, where 103 were positive for SARS-CoV2 infection. A habitual food frequency questionnaire was designed to collect information on the dietary intake of adults during three months prior to their COVID-19 tests. The study showed that those COVID-19-positive individuals, with an increased habitual intake of legumes, grains, bread and cereals, showed decreased overall [symptom](#) severity.

"The study shows the importance of care regarding diet management in COVID19 time. The importance of diet management for any disease is well known to the scientific community. So it is not surprising that taking certain food groups showed benefit for outpatients," said Professor Elihud Salazar-Robles, the leading author of the paper.

"This study is only a start and the sample size is relatively small. However, even such a study shows how important the effect of diet can be. The study does not negate the essential attention to vaccination. Alternatively, it shows that how diet management can help vaccination to mitigate the burden of COVID-19. The outcomes of our study provide a base for considering diet for close contacts to COVID-19 patients and

can be promoted for further explorations," said Dr. Claudia Lerma, the corresponding author of the paper.

The study was published in the journal of *BMJ Nutrition, Prevention & Health*, titled "Association between severity of COVID-19 symptoms and habitual food intake in adult outpatients," and was co-authored by Elihud Salazar-Robles, Kouros Kalantar-Zadeh, Humberto Badillo, Martín Calderón-Juárez, Cesar Alberto García-Bárceñas, Pedro Daniel Ledesma-Pérez, Abel Lerma and Claudia Lerma in November 2021.

More information: Elihud Salazar-Robles et al, Association between severity of COVID-19 symptoms and habitual food intake in adult outpatients, *BMJ Nutrition, Prevention & Health* (2021). [DOI: 10.1136/bmjnph-2021-000348](https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjnph-2021-000348)

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