

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

8TH MEETING OF YOUNG RESEARCHERS
OF UNIVERSITY OF PORTO



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Anthropometric measurements and physical activity in an elderly population of Autonomous Region of Madeira

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On the latest years, there has been an increase on the number of people over 65 years. Consequently there has been an increase of studies that focus this population and tries to understand their changes, characteristics and risk factors so we can create scales of risk on this age group.

With aging, there are changes in body composition that have great influence in the comfort of the elderly and can put their own health in question. Decreased muscle mass and bone mass and increased fat mass are view frequently on this population, contributing to the weakness.

Adding to these changes, increasing sedentary lifestyle has a major impact on health and well - being of elder persons.

This research tries to contribute to the deepening of the existing knowledge about the elderly and tries to characterize and establish a relationship between anthropometric measurements and physical activity in an elderly population.

The aim of this study was to evaluate a representative sample of the population of Autonomous Region of Madeira over the age of 65. In total 1181 individuals of all counties and parishes in the region were surveyed. Data collection was conducted between February and August of 2013.

According to the objectives, a questionnaire was developed which included questions related to sociodemographic characteristics, anthropometric data, clinicopathological background, assessing nutritional risk, among others.

The parameters that showed influence on anthropometric values in this population were gender, age, education, the place of residence and type of physical activity performed. The average weight was 72,2 kg and the average BMI was 29,4 kg/m², values higher than found in other studies in Portugal.

Gender and physical activity reveled to influence body composition of old people. Women and inactive persons had higher values for the parameters used to assess fat mass and lower values for the ones that measure lean mass. Porto Santo was the county with the higher BMI and body fat percentage. On the other hand, in Santa Cruz, the body fat percentage was the lowest and values of muscle mass were the highest.

In conclusion, older people in Madeira Archipelago are at risk of developing metabolic complications associated with obesity because they have showed values above the cutoff. In this study, we showed the relevance of measure anthropometric values and physical activity in elderly population.