Prevalence of vitamin B-12 deficiency in older adults Déficit de vitamina B-12 en adultos mayores: ¿un problema de salud pública en Chile?

Sánchez, Hugo
Albala, Cecilia
Hertrampf, Eva
Verdugo, Renato
Lavados, Manuel
Castillo, Jose Luis
Lera, Lydia
Uauy, Ricardo

Background: There is a correlation between aging and the decrease of plasma levels of vitamin B-12. Aim: To determine the prevalence of vitamin B-12 and folate deficiency and its hematological impact among older adults (AM). Material and Methods: Cross-sectional study, in 1028 subjects aged 65 to 87 years, living in community and evaluated between 2005 and 2008. Percentile distribution of vitamin B-12, folate, hemoglobin, packed red cell volume and mean cell volume by gender and age were < 148 pmol/L, marginal analyzed. Deficiency was defined as vitamin B-12 levels deficiency as vitamin B-12 levels < 221 pmol/L, anemia was defined as an hemoglobin < 13 and 12 g/dL among men and women, respectively. Results: The prevalence of vitamin B-12 deficiency was 12% and the figure for marginal deficiency was 25.4%. Males were more affected than females (p < 0.001). The frequency of anemia was 8.6%, and was higher among women (p = 0.004). Conclusions: There is a high prevalence of full blown and