

Copper status and intake in aged healthy men and chronic patients

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This cross-sectional study assess copper status and intake and their relationships with some biochemical variables in 52 elderly male patients with chronic diseases and 50 healthy elderly. Copper was determined by atomic absorption spectrometry and food intake by a food frequency questionnaire and 24-hour recall method Results show that copper plasma levels are significantly higher ($p < 0.0001$) in the healthy elderly men (1.255 ± 0.304 mg/l) compared to chronic patients (0.949 ± 0.205 mg/l) although daily intakes do not differ significantly (1.336 ± 0.574 mg vs 1.447 ± 0.610 mg, $p < 0.35$). Plasma copper is positively associated to total cholesterol ($r=0.25$, $p<0.06$) in chronic patients and negatively in the healthy elderly group($r=-0.15$, $p<0.27$), without statistical significance These facts would suggest that chronic diseases are accompanied by an alteration of copper plasma levels, in spite of a similar intake. (Research grant from ICA-CIMM).