



Elderly people's preference for meal appearance and composition

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INTRODUCTION

Elderly people are often dependent on food prepared by others. As elderly people frequently have a low appetite, the appearance and composition of the meal is extremely important to increase their pleasure of eating.

AIM

To identify elderly people's preferences for meal appearance and composition.

METHODS

Photos of meals were designed in a 5² factor experiment:

- Traditional (2 dimensional) and modern (3 dimensional)
- Meat cut as a steak or as cubes
- Vegetables as root fruits or as wok green
- With or without gravy
- With or without herbs

Simultaneously, four series of eight photos were shown to the elderly people (n=64, mainly older than 80 years), and they were asked 'which one do you prefer?', 'which one do you prefer second best?', 'which one do you prefer the least?'



RESULTS

- Serving and vegetables were the most important factors
- Traditional serving was preferred to modern serving
- Wok vegetables were preferred to root fruits
- Gravy was preferred
- Herbs were preferred but mainly in the traditional serving
- Meat as a steak was preferred to meat as cubes



Most preferred



Least preferred

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The elderly people prefer the appearance of meals with a traditional serving with traditional vegetables, meat as a steak, gravy and herbs. Only a few interactions were seen. One of the most pronounced was the much lower liking of meat in cubes in the modern serving compared with the traditional serving with smaller differences for the steak. This knowledge is relevant for meal design for this very sensitive target group to increase their energy intake.



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