

# WHAT DO RESIDENT PHYSICIANS KNOW ABOUT NUTRITION?

## - A SURVEY AT AN UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

Claudia Matta Coelho<sup>1</sup>, Selma B. Souto<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Endocrinology Department, Braga Hospital, Portugal



## INTRODUCTION

Nutrition is one of the pillars of disease prevention. However, the curriculum of medical schools does not contemplate this field in a satisfactory manner. The aim of this survey was to better understand clinical nutrition knowledge among resident physicians in an university hospital.

## METHODS

A questionnaire was sent to the institutional email address of 201 resident physicians working in Braga Hospital during 2015 and shared on a digital platform. The questionnaire was based on a non-validated questionnaire used in a population of Canadian physicians(1). It included 12 multiple-choice questions and general queries about nutrition training in university.

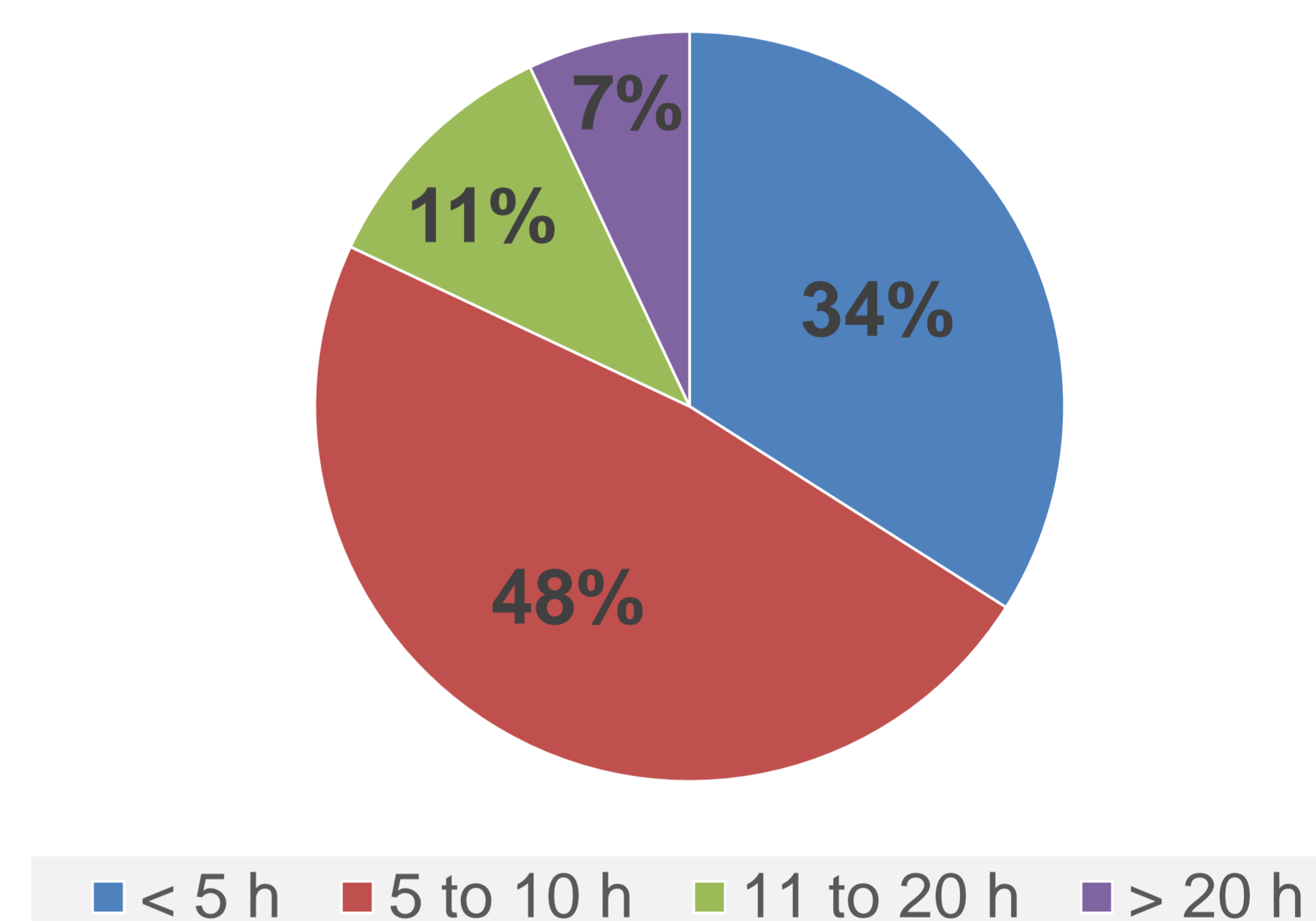
## RESULTS

24,8% (n=50) resident physicians answered

The mean score was 58%

No differences between gender or medical specialities

The majority (82%) of resident physicians referred training in Nutrition during Medical Faculty inferior to 10 hours (graphic 1)



Graphic 1. – Training in nutrition during medical faculty

Table 1. – Questions of questionnaire sent to resident physicians with correct answer and percentage of correct answers.

QUESTION	CORRECT ANSWER	% CORRECT
A common nutrient deficiency in alcoholics is:	Vitamin B1 (thiamin)	100
The nutrient strongly associated with the prevention of neural tube defect is:	Folate	100
A nutrient believed to help prevent thrombosis is:	Omega-3	84
A type of food believed to have a preventive effect on various types of cancer is:	Fruit and Vegetables	80
Which nutrient is protective against hypertension:	Potassium	70
The most concentrated source of vitamin B12 is:	Meat	66
The number of kilocalories in one gram of fat is:	9	66
What is the energetic value (Kcal) of 1000 ml of glucose 5% infusion:	200 Kcal	58
The typical daily salt intake of Portuguese is:	10-11 g	56
The major type of fat in olive oil is:	Monounsaturated	38
If a person habitually consumes 10 tablets a day of vitamin-mineral supplements, which nutrient is least likely to cause toxicity:	Vitamin E	26
Which substance raises the blood HDL-cholesterol level:	Alcohol	14

## DISCUSSION

The study involved a small number of resident physicians and the response rate was low, which is an important limitation. Nevertheless, it seems consensual that current resident physicians lacked training in nutrition during the medical degree. The two highest scored questions were the same in our survey and the Canadian study, besides the geography and time gap between studies.