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Original Article

Association of dietary diversity with all-cause mortality by body mass index in Japanese

older adults: An age-specific prospective cohort study (NISSIN Project)

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1   **ABSTRACT**

2   **Aim**: Dietary diversity may reduce the risk of malnutrition, although it is also linked to

3   obesity. We examined whether dietary diversity is associated with all-cause mortality in

4   Japanese older adults based on their body mass index (BMI).

5   **Methods**: The current study included 2,944 people aged 64–65 years who participated in the

6   NISSIN project from 1996 to 2005. Dietary diversity was measured using the Food Variety

7   Score (FVS), which calculates the frequency of all food items consumed daily using a self-

8   administered food frequency questionnaire. Participants were divided into tertiles according

9   to their FVS (first: low, second: middle, third: high). Multivariate adjusted hazard ratios

10   (HRs) with 95% confidence intervals (CIs) were calculated using the Cox proportional

11   hazard regression model. For the stratified analysis, BMI was used to divide the participants

12   into three groups—lean (BMI <20), normal (BMI 20–24.9), and overweight/obese (BMI

13   ≥25).

14   **Results**: Overall, 454 (30.7%) men and 222 (15.2%) women died over a median follow-up

15   period of 16.6 years. No significant association was observed between FVS and all-cause

16   mortality. However, when grouped by BMI, for the participants in the lean group, the

17   multivariate adjusted HRs were 0.56 (CI: 0.32–0.96) for the middle FVS and 0.50 (CI: 0.25–

18   1.02) for the high FVS, compared with the low FVS *(p for trend*=0.059). In overweight/obese

19   women, although not significant, total mortality was higher in the middle and high FVS.

20 **Conclusions**: These findings indicate that dietary diversity should be promoted in lean older

21 Japanese adults.

22

23 **Keywords:** dietary diversity, mortality, body mass index, Food Variety Score, older adults

24

INTRODUCTION

Dietary diversity is a proxy measurement of nutrient adequacy[1] and is linked to a decrease in all-cause mortality.[2][3][4] Older adults have a higher risk of malnutrition[5] because of appetite loss,[6] reduced chewing ability,[7] or their socioeconomic conditions.[8] Dietary diversity may reduce the risks of malnutrition and loss of weight through both adequate nutrient intake and an increase in total energy intake (TEI).[9] However, that is also linked to obesity due to an excessive TEI.[10,11] Both high and low body mass index (BMI) are important predictors of all-cause mortality.[12] Thus, the association of dietary diversity with all-cause mortality may be influenced by BMI, but no studies have examined the effect of BMI on the association of dietary diversity with all-cause mortality.

This study examined the association of dietary diversity with all-cause mortality and the effect of BMI in older adults. Dietary diversity was evaluated by the number of different types of food consumed, which increased the TEI.[9]

METHODS

Study design and population

The study population was sampled from the New Integrated Suburban Seniority Investigation (NISSIN) Project, a prospective age-specific cohort study, from 1996 to 2005. Details of this cohort have been reported elsewhere.[13] Briefly, residents of Nisshin city, Aichi

6

44   prefecture who were 65 years old when they participated in the survey from 1996 to 2005

45   were invited to participate in the free health examinations conducted annually by the local

46   government. The baseline survey consisted of a medical checkup, including somatometry and

47   blood tests, and a self-administered questionnaire, which included a food frequency

48   questionnaire (FFQ).

49   This cohort enrolled 3,073 participants who provided informed consent. The overall

50   response rate was 43.9%. The exclusion criteria were as follows: relocation from the city

51   prior to the start of the follow-up period (n = 2), not completing the entire FFQ (n = 112),

52   presence of extreme TEI estimated by the FFQ (<500 kcal or >5000 kcal daily, n= 10),[14] and

53   missing values for >40 of 90 items in the FFQ (n = 5). After applying the exclusion criteria,

54   2,944 (1,481 men and 1,463 women) were eligible for this study.

55   This study was approved by the Ethics Committees of Hokkaido University

56   Graduate School of Medicine (Medicine 14-037), the Ethics Committees of the National

57   Center for Geriatrics and Gerontology in Japan, the Ethics Committee of Nagoya University

58   Graduate School of Medicine, and the Ethics Committees of Aichi Medical University

59   School of Medicine. Informed consent was adopted in the form of an opt-out from 1996 to

60   2001 (and there were many such refusals) and written informed consent was required from

61   2002 to 2005.

62

63   **Dietary assessment and dietary diversity**

64   Dietary assessment was conducted using a validated self-administered FFQ, which contained

65   90-modern Japanese food items or dishes. Eight vitamins and other products were excluded

66   because the frequency of intake was not asked and added rice with portion sizes.[15] The

67   following food groups are included in the calculation of FSV; Rice, Bread, Noodles, Other

68   cereals, Potatoes, Sugar, Confectionery, Oils and fats, Nuts, Beans, Seafood, Meat, Eggs,

69   Dairy product, Fruits, Mushrooms, Algae, Seasoning, Green/Yellow vegetables, Other

70   vegetables. The participants were asked to report the average frequency of consumption over

71   the past year.

72   There were nine options for questions about the frequency of food items or dishes:

73   less than once per month, once per month, 2–3 times per month, once per week, 2–4 times

74   per week, 5–6 times per week, once per day, 2–3 times per day, and more than 3 times per

75   day. To measure dietary diversity, we used the Food Variety Score (FVS), the most widely

76   used measure of dietary diversity,[16] which counts all the food items consumed in a day. To

77   calculate the FVS, the frequencies for once per month, 2–3 times per month, once per week,

78   2–4 times per week, and 5–6 times per week were converted to 1/30, 2.5/30, 1/7, 3/7, and

79   5.5/7 times. If the consumption frequency of the same food items or dishes was more than

80   once per day, it was counted as 7/7 times. The TEI was calculated based on the FFQ in

81   accordance with the Japanese food composition table.[15]

82

Assessment of nutrient adequacy

To evaluate nutrient adequacy, the nutrient adequacy ratio (NAR), the ratio of a participant's

intake to the recommended dietary allowance (RDA) or tentative dietary goals (DG)

according to the Dietary Reference Intakes for Japanese (2020),[17] was calculated for each of

the 10 nutrients. Cholesterol was used as the recommended value, which is less than 200

mg/day is desirable for the purpose of preventing severe cases of dyslipidemia[17]   The NAR

was calculated as follows:

$$NAR = \frac{Actual\ nutrient\ intake\ of\ a\ nutrient\ (per\ day)}{RDA, DG\ or\ recommended\ value\ of\ a\ given\ nutrient}$$

Moreover, except for already energy adjusted saturated fat**,** we energy-adjusted NAR

using estimated energy requirement (EER) and TEI (NAR × EER (kcal/d) / TEI (kcal/d).[18]

The physical activity to identify EER is assumed low.[19] For eight nutrients (proteins, dietary

fiber, vitamin C, potassium, calcium, magnesium, iron, and zinc) in which a deficient supply

could pose health risks the NARs above 1 were set to 1 (Range: 0 to 1). This was because a

nutrient with a high NAR could not compensate for a nutrient with a low NAR[20] when

calculating the mean adequacy ratio (MAR). Similarly, for two nutrients (saturated fat and

cholesterol) in which excess supply could be a health risk, NARs below 1 were set to 1

(Range: $\geqq$ 1).

100   The MAR was calculated as an overall measure of nutrient adequacy.[16] The eight

101   nutrients were used and the MAR was calculated as follows (Range: 0 to 1).:

102
$$MAR = \frac{\sum NAR}{Number\ of\ nutrients(=8)}$$

103   The mean excess ratio (MER) was used as an indicator of nutrient restriction. [21]

104   The two nutrients were used, and the MER was calculated as follows (Range: $\geqq 0$):

105
$$MER = \frac{\sum NAR}{Number\ of\ nutrients\ (=2)} - 1$$

106

107   **Body mass index (BMI)**

108   Weight and height were measured during the medical checkup to calculate body mass index

109   (BMI, kg/m^2). Using BMI, participants were divided into three groups: lean (BMI <20),

110   normal (BMI 20–24.9), and overweight/obese (BMI ≥25), which is applied when

111   considering malnutrition in older adults.[22]

112

113   **Covariates**

114   A self-administered questionnaire was used to evaluate sociodemographic and lifestyle

115   factors. The medical status included hypertension, hyperlipidaemia, and diabetes mellitus;

116   Hypertension was identified as a systolic or diastolic blood pressure higher than 140 or 90

117   mmHg, respectively, or self-reported hypertension. Hyperlipidaemia was defined as total

118   cholesterol ≥220 mg/dL, LDL cholesterol (total cholesterol - HDL cholesterol -

119   triglyceride/5) ≥140 mg/dL, triglyceride ≥150 mg/dL, HDL cholesterol <40 mg/dl, and/or

120   self-reported hyperlipidaemia. Diabetes mellitus was identified as haemoglobin A1c (HbA1c)

121   ≥6.5%, fasting plasma glucose ≥126 mg/dL, or self-reported diabetes mellitus.

122   Self-reported history of disease included clinically diagnosed heart disease (yes or no),

123   cerebrovascular disease (yes or no), and cancer (yes or no).

124

125   **Outcome follow-up**

126   Each participant underwent an annual follow-up until death, transfer out of the city, or until

127   the end of the follow-up period (31 December 2019). The date of death and transfer out of the

128   city was confirmed using the resident registry. The transfer out of the city was treated as a

129   censored case.

130

131   **Statistical analysis**

132   Participants were divided into tertiles according to their FVS (first: low, second: middle,

133   third: high): overall in sex-stratified tertiles, not in tertiles of men and women together. The

134   characteristics of each group were described. The differences in the characteristics among the

135   groups were examined using the Pearson's chi-square test (categorical variables), analysis of

136   variance (ANOVA) (continuous variables).

137 A multivariate Cox proportional hazards regression model was used to calculate hazard ratios

138 (HRs) and the corresponding 95% confidence intervals (CIs) of the risk of subsequent all-

139 cause mortality according to the FVS with participants in the low FVS being used as the

140 reference group. In the stratified analysis by BMI, participants were divided into three BMI

141 groups (lean, normal, overweight/obese). Two sensitivity analyses were performed: 1.

142 Excluding participants with a history of heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, and cancer, 2.

143 Excluding participants who died or moved within 3 years from baseline.

144   Analyses were carried out by the following models: adjusted for survey year and sex

145 (except for the stratified analysis by sex in Tables 2–3 and Supplemental Tables 2), (model

146 1); adjusted for living alone (yes, no, or unknown), education (lower than high school, high

147 school or above, or unknown), smoking status (never, former, current, or unknown), alcohol

148 consumption (never, current or unknown)), habitual exercise (seldom, <1 times/week, ≥1

149 times/week or unknown).

150 In addition to model 1, model 2 was adjusted for history of heart disease (yes, no),

151 cerebrovascular disease (yes, no), cancer (yes, no) (except for the sensitivity analysis 1 in

152 Table 2 and Supplemental Table 2), medical status of hypertension (yes, no), hyperlipidaemia

153 (yes, no) and diabetes mellitus (yes, no).In addition to model 2, model 3 was adjusted for

154 BMI (lean, normal, overweight/obese) (except for Table 3, Supplemental Tables 2),

155 In addition to model 3, model 4 was adjusted for BMI category and TEI (continuous).

156 The *p* value for the trend across the mean values of the tertile of the FVS was calculated.

157 Statistical significance was set at *p* <0.05. All statistical analyses were performed using JMP

158 Pro 16.0.0 for Mac (SAS Institute, Cary, NC, USA).

159

160 **RESULTS**

161 In total, 454 (30.7%) men and 222 (15.2%) women died over the median follow-up period of

162 16.6 years and 17.6 years, respectively.

163 Table 1 shows the baseline characteristics according to the tertile of their FVS. Compared to

164 the participants in the low FVS, the participants in the high FVS were more likely to have a

165 high school education or higher, exercise habitually and those were less likely to be living

166 alone. The high FVS were fewer current smokers. In the analysis by BMI, the high FVS of all

167 the BMI groups were more likely to have a high school education or higher (Supplemental

168 Table 1).

169   FVS was positively associated with total nutrient adequacy, as indicated by MAR.

170 However, the FVS was also positively associated with MER which is an indicator of excess

171 nutrients. The results of the analysis by BMI were similar (Supplemental Table 1).

172   Table 2 shows the multivariate adjusted HRs and corresponding 95% CIs for the

173 association of FVS with all-cause mortality overall or by sex. No significant association of

13

174 the FVS with all-cause mortality was observed. This association did not change in the

175 sensitivity analyses 1–2.

176   The interaction between FVS and BMI was significant (p <0.001). Table 3 shows the

177 multivariate adjusted HRs and the corresponding 95% CIs for the association of FVS with

178 all-cause mortality by BMI (lean, normal, overweight/ obese) or by sex and BMI. In the lean

179 group, although it contains non-significant results, the multivariate adjusted HRs were 0.56

180 (CI: 0.32–0.96) for the middle FVS and 0.50 (CI: 0.25–1.02) for the high FVS, compared

181 with the low FVS *(p for trend*=0.059). This association did not change in sensitivity analyses

182 1–2 (Supplemental Tables 2). No consistent association was found among BMI standards and

183 overweight/obesity.

184   In men, the interaction between FVS and BMI was not significant *(p for*

185 interaction=0.182); however, in women, this interaction was significant (*p* for

186 interaction<0.001). In women lean/standard BMI, all-cause mortality was lower in the

187 medium/high FVS than in the low FVS, although this was not statistically significant.

188 Conversely, overweight/obese women had higher all-cause mortality in the medium/high

189 FVS than in the low FVS, although the association was not significant. This association did

190 not change in the sensitive analysis 1-2 (Supplemental Tables 2).

191

192 **DISCUSSION**

193   This is the first study to examine the association between dietary diversity and all-cause

194   mortality among older adults, along with the effect of modification by BMI. No significant

195   association was observed between FVS and all-cause mortality. However, in the stratified

196   analysis by BMI, in the lean group, although it contains non-significant results, including

197   sensitivity analyses, all-cause mortality was consistently lower in the medium and high FVS

198   than in the low FVS. Moreover, in women, although the association was not significant,

199   overweight/obesity had consistently higher all-cause mortality in the medium/high FVS than

200   in the low FVS.

201   In the stratified analysis by BMI, all-cause mortality was lower in the medium/high

202   FVS compared to the low FVS in the lean group. One possible reason for this is that an

203   increase in the FVS raised the MAR, which indicated the overall nutrient adequacy and

204   reduced deficiencies of nutrients with antioxidant and anti-inflammatory functions, leading to

205   a reduction in all-cause mortality.[23] Another reason might be the necessity to obtain and

206   prepare various foods to consume different types of foods. Individuals with a higher dietary

207   diversity have a lower decline in higher functional capacity[24]. Furthermore, dietary diversity

208   is associated with greater lean mass and improved physical functions.[25] The maintenance of

209   these functional capacities through a higher FVS may have had a protective effect on all-

210   cause mortality. These considerations suggest that it was more plausible to have more

211   significant results for women who are generally the primary cooks in the home.[26] Among

15

212   women, in addition to the lean group, this may be one reason why all-cause mortality was

213   lower in the medium/high FVS compared to the low FVS, even in the BMI standard group.

214   In contrast, overweight/obese women had higher all-cause mortality in the

215   medium/high FVS than in the low FVS. In women, the association between dietary diversity

216   and all-cause mortality was shown to have a different effect with modification by BMI. One

217   reason for this may be that the nutritional characteristics of the FVS in this study were

218   positively associated with the MER, an indicator of the nutrients that should be restricted. A

219   recent review also points out current evidences didn't support higher dietary diversity as an

220   effective strategy to promote healthy eating patterns among middle-aged adults.[27] Saturated

221   fat intake is associated with cardiovascular disease in a high-risk population for

222   cardiovascular disease.[28] Obesity is a risk factors for cardiovascular disease,[28] and thus, in the

223   overweight and obese group of women, saturated fat intake may have increased total

224   mortality through increased cardiovascular disease. Regarding dietary cholesterol, there is a

225   positive linear association between dietary cholesterol intake and all-cause mortality,[29] with a

226   significantly higher association for women than for men.[29] Thus, the effects of increased risk

227   factors for total mortality and increased MER in overweight and obese women may have

228   outweighed the preventive effects of dietary diversity seen in the lean group.

229   The strength of this study was its design, which was an age-specific cohort with a

230   long follow-up period. Dietary diversity changes begin around 65 years of age for the

16

231 Japanese population,[30] and people at this turning point were recruited for this study.

232 Adjustments for a history of heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, cancer, hypertension,

233 hyperlipidaemia, and diabetes mellitus, which may affect dietary intake, improved the

234 validity of this study's findings. Moreover, the analysis excluded participants who died or

235 moved within 3 years from baseline, and this did not change the findings.

236 This study has several limitations. First, a response rate of 43.9% suggested a

237 possible selection bias. Generalizing our results to Japanese older adult populations requires

238 caution. Moreover, since the study may be conducted in a relatively health-conscious

239 population because of this response rate, the impact of dietary diversity may have been

240 overestimated. Second, residual confounding may have been likely, although we adjusted for

241 several covariates. Third, the relatively small sample size and small number of deaths did not

242 allow this study to analyse the relationship between the FVS and specific cause of death

243 although the FVS is known to reduce mortality in coronary heart disease.[2] Future studies to

244 examine the relationship would be helpful. Fourth, using self-reported dietary and lifestyle

245 questionnaires and the FFQ may have resulted in some misclassification and residual

246 confounding. However, using a 4-day dietary record validated the FFQ for food groups.[15]

247 In conclusion, these findings indicate that dietary diversity should be promoted in lean older

248 adults. BMI may influence the association between dietary diversity and all-cause mortality.

249

258 **Disclosure statement:** All authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.
259
260 **Data Availability Statement:** Data cannot be shared for privacy or ethical reasons.
261

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262

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380   Supplemental Table 1. Baseline characters of participants according to FVS by BMI group or

381   by sex and BMI group.

382   Supplemental Table 2. Multivariate-adjusted HRs and corresponding 95% CIs for the

383   association of FVS with all-cause mortality by BMI group or by sex and BMI group

384   excluding participants with history of heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, and cancer or

385   excluding participants died or moved within 3 years from baseline.

386

Table 1. Baseline characters of participants according to the tertile of their FVS overall or by sex.

	ALL		1st (low)		2nd (middle)		3rd (high)		P value
ALL									
Number of participants	2,944		981	33.3	983	33.4	980	33.3	
FVS (mean, SD)	20.9	7.6	13.5	3.4	20.4	2.9	29.0	5.6	<0.001
Women (n, %)	1,463	49.7	487	49.6	489	49.8	487	49.7	1.0
Living alone (n, %)	117	4.0	54	5.5	36	3.7	27	2.8	0.028
Education $\geqq$ High School (n, %)	2,016	68.5	576	58.7	715	72.7	725	74.0	<0.001
Current Smoking (n, %)	521	17.7	208	21.2	169	17.2	144	14.7	<0.001
Current Drinking (n, %)	1,305	44.3	433	44.1	443	45.1	429	43.8	0.667
Habitual Exercise ($\geqq$1 times/week) (n, %)	1,486	50.5	440	44.9	504	51.3	542	55.3	<0.001
Heart Disease (Yes) (n, %)	107	3.6	44	4.5	30	3.1	33	3.4	0.204
Cerebrovascular disease (Yes) (n, %)	129	4.4	37	3.8	45	4.6	47	4.8	0.506
Cancer (Yes) (n, %)	111	3.8	32	3.3	40	4.1	39	4.0	0.589
Hypertension (Yes) (n, %)	1,354	46.0	476	48.5	451	45.9	427	43.6	0.089
Hyperlipidemia (Yes) (n, %)	1,903	64.6	629	64.1	643	65.4	631	65.4	0.819
Diabetes mellitus (Yes) (n, %)	318	10.8	104	10.6	110	11.2	104	10.6	0.891
BMI <20 (kg/m^2) (n, %)	371	12.6	125	12.7	119	12.1	127	13.0	0.025
BMI$\geqq$25 (kg/m^2) (n, %)	662	22.5	252	25.7	195	19.8	215	21.9	0.025
TEI (kcal/day) (mean, SD)	1,909	611	1,481	395	1,841	437	2,406	583	<0.001
MAR (mean, SD)	0.87	0.10	0.81	0.11	0.88	0.08	0.92	0.06	<0.001
MER (mean, SD)	0.29	0.31	0.21	0.31	0.30	0.31	0.36	0.28	<0.001
Men									
Number of participants	1,481	100.0	494	33.4	494	33.4	493	33.3	
FVS (mean, SD)	17.6	6.7	10.6	2.5	17.1	1.6	25.1	4.6	<0.001
Living alone (n, %)	26	1.8	15	3.0	6	1.2	5	1.0	0.099
Education $\geqq$ High School (n, %)	1,064	71.8	333	67.4	373	75.7	358	72.6	0.048
Current Smoking (n, %)	467	31.5	174	35.2	153	31.0	140	28.4	0.239
Current Drinking (n, %)	1,019	68.8	334	67.6	352	71.3	333	67.6	0.330
Habitual Exercise ($\geqq$1 times/week) (n, %)	757	51.1	228	46.2	256	51.8	273	55.4	0.072

Heart Disease (Yes) (n, %)	72	4.9	26	5.3	20	4.1	26	5.3	0.589
Cerebrovascular disease (Yes) (n, %)	77	5.2	20	4.1	28	5.7	29	5.9	0.365
Cancer (Yes) (n, %)	49	3.3	7	1.4	19	3.9	23	4.7	0.012
Hypertension (Yes) (n, %)	762	51.5	275	55.7	249	50.4	238	48.3	0.057
Hyperlipidemia (Yes) (n, %)	859	58.0	288	58.3	289	58.5	282	57.2	0.906
Diabetes mellitus (Yes) (n, %)	155	10.5	45	9.1	53	10.7	57	11.5	0.453
BMI <20 (kg/m^2) (n, %)	144	9.7	54	10.9	45	9.1	45	9.1	0.115
BMI ≧25 (kg/m^2) (n, %)	372	25.1	140	28.3	110	22.3	122	24.8	0.115
TEI (kcal/day) (mean, SD)	1,909	604	1,512	425	1,845	466	2,369	568	<0.001
MAR (mean, SD)	0.84	0.10	0.77	0.11	0.86	0.08	0.90	0.06	<0.001
MER (mean, SD)	0.34	0.35	0.24	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.42	0.31	<0.001
Women									
Number of participants	1,463	100.0	487	33.3	489	33.4	487	33.6	
FVS (mean, SD)	23.3	7.6	15.4	3.1	22.7	1.9	31.9	5.0	<0.001
Living alone (n, %)	91	6.2	39	8.0	30	6.1	22	4.5	0.209
Education ≧ High School (n, %)	952	65.1	243	49.9	342	69.9	367	75.4	<0.001
Current Smoking (n, %)	54	3.7	34	7.0	16	3.3	4	0.8	<0.001
Current Drinking (n, %)	286	19.6	99	20.3	91	18.6	96	19.7	0.790
Habitual Exercise (≧1 times/week) (n, %)	729	49.8	212	43.5	248	50.7	269	55.2	<0.001
Heart Disease (Yes) (n, %)	35	2.4	18	3.7	10	2.0	7	1.4	0.058
Cerebrovascular disease (Yes) (n, %)	52	3.6	17	3.5	17	3.5	18	3.7	0.979
Cancer (Yes) (n, %)	62	4.2	25	5.1	21	4.3	16	3.3	0.358
Hypertension (Yes) (n, %)	592	40.5	201	41.3	202	41.3	189	38.8	0.632
Hyperlipidemia (Yes) (n, %)	1,044	71.4	341	70.0	354	72.4	349	71.7	0.703
Diabetes mellitus (Yes) (n, %)	104	7.1	32	6.5	42	8.6	30	6.2	0.283
BMI <20 (kg/m^2) (n, %)	227	15.5	71	14.6	74	15.2	82	16.8	0.211
BMI ≧25 (kg/m^2) (n, %)	290	19.8	112	23.0	85	17.4	93	19.1	0.211
TEI (kcal/day) (mean, SD)	1,910	16	1,451	360	1,837	406	2,441	597	<0.001
MAR (mean, SD)	0.89	0.08	0.84	0.09	0.91	0.07	0.93	0.06	<0.001
MER (mean, SD)	0.24	0.25	0.18	0.25	0.24	0.25	0.31	0.24	<0.001

FVS: Food Variety Score, TEI: total energy intake, BMI: body mass index, MAR: mean adequacy ratio, MER: mean excess ratio

Differences in characters across FVS were examined by Pearson's chi-square test (categorical variables) or ANOVA (continuous variables).

Table 2. Multivariate-adjusted HRs and corresponding 95% CIs for the association of FVS with all-cause mortality overall or by sex.

	1st (low)		2nd (middle)		3rd (high)		P for trend
			FVS				
All (n=2,944)							
FVS mean, SD	13.5	3.4	20.4	2.9	29.0	5.6	
Person-year	15,755		16,100		15,472		
Cases	245		208		223		
Model1[1]	1.00		0.84 (0.70-1.00)		0.95 (0.79-1.14)		0.618
Model2	1.00		0.88 (0.73-1.06)		1.00 (0.84-1.21)		0.870
Model3[1]	1.00		0.87 (0.72-1.05)		1.02 (0.85-1.23)		0.759
Model4	1.00		0.84 (0.69-1.02)		0.93 (0.74-1.18)		0.579
Excluding participants with history of heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, and cancer (n=2,615)							
FVS mean, SD	13.5	3.5	20.4	3.0	29.0	5.7	
Person-year	14,048		14,329		13,837		
Cases	215		179		187		
Model1[1]	1.00		0.82 (0.67-1.00)*		0.89 (0.73-1.08)		0.280
Model2	1.00		0.87 (0.71-1.07)		0.96 (0.78-1.16)		0.613
Model3[2]	1.00		0.87 (0.71-1.07)		0.97 (0.79-1.18)		0.706
Model4	1.00		0.86 (0.69-1.06)		0.92 (0.71-1.19)		0.393
Excluding participants died or moved within 3 years from baseline (n=2,825)							
FVS mean, SD	13.5	3.4	20.3	2.9	28.9	5.6	
Person-year	15,583		15,921		15,633		
Cases	232		195		210		
Model1[1]	1.00		0.83 (0.68-1.00)		0.92 (0.76-1.10)		0.409
Model2	1.00		0.87 (0.72-1.05)		0.97 (0.80-1.17)		0.794
Model3[1]	1.00		0.86 (0.71-1.04)		0.98 (0.81-1.19)		0.915
Model4	1.00		0.84 (0.69-1.03)		0.93 (0.73-1.19)		0.581
Men							
All (n=1,481)							
FVS mean, SD	11.6	2.5	18.1	1.6	26.1	4.6	

							p
Person-year	7,666		7,892		7,349		
Cases	158		137		159		
Model1[2]	1.00		0.84 (0.67-1.06)		1.07 (0.86-1.33)		0.494
Model2	1.00		0.89 (0.71-1.12)		1.12 (0.90-1.40)		0.268
Model3[1]	1.00		0.88 (0.70-1.11)		1.14 (0.91-1.43)		0.205
Model4	1.00		0.85 (0.66-1.08)		1.03 (0.78-1.36)		0.797

Excluding participants with history of heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, and cancer (n=1,292)

FVS mean, SD	11.4	2.6	17.9	1.6	25.9	4.5	
Person-year	6,626		6,878		6,502		
Cases	138		120		130		
Model1[2]	1.00		0.85 (0.66-1.08)		0.97 (0.76-1.23)		0.847
Model2	1.00		0.90 (0.70-1.15)		1.02 (0.80-1.30)		0.823
Model3[2]	1.00		0.91 (0.71-1.17)		1.04 (0.82-1.33)		0.688
Model4	1.00		0.87 (0.67-1.13)		0.96 (0.71-1.30)		0.823

Excluding participants died or moved within 3 years from baseline (n=1,414)

FVS mean, SD	11.6	2.5	18.0	1.6	25..891	4.4	
Person-year	7,534		7,770		7,487		
Cases	150		129		149		
Model1[2]	1.00		0.84 (0.66-1.07)		1.02 (0.81-1.28)		0.811
Model2	1.00		0.89 (0.70-1.13)		1.06 (0.85-1.34)		0.540
Model3[1]	1.00		0.88 (0.69-1.12)		1.08 (0.86-1.36)		0.439
Model4	1.00		0.86 (0.67-1.10)		1.04 (0.78-1.39)		0.737

Women
All(n=1,463)

FVS mean, SD	15.4	3.1	22.7	1.9	31.9	5.0	
Person-year	8,090		8,208		8,123		
Cases	87		71		64		
Model1[2]	1.00		0.81 (0.59-1.11)		0.73 (0.53-1.01)		0.059
Model2	1.00		0.86 (0.62-1.19)		0.78 (0.56-1.10)		0.157
Model3[1]	1.00		0.85 (0.61-1.17)		0.81 (0.58-1.14)		0.223

						p for trend
Model4	1.00		0.82 (0.58-1.16)		0.74 (0.47-1.16)	0.186
Excluding participants with history of heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, and cancer (n=1,323)						
FVS mean, SD	15.4	3.1	22.9	1.9	32.0	5.0
Person -year	7,421		7,451		7,335	
Cases	77		59		57	
Model1[2]	1.00		0.77 (0.55-1.08)		0.75 (0.53-1.06)	0.109
Model2	1.00		0.80 (0.57-1.14)		0.79 (0.55-1.13)	0.215
Model3[2]	1.00		0.79 (0.55-1.12)		0.80 (0.56-1.14)	0.227
Model4	1.00		0.77 (0.53-1.12)		0.76 (0.47-1.22)	0.254
Excluding participants died or moved within 3 years from baseline (n=1,411)						
FVS mean, SD	15.37	3.02	22.64	1.85	31.87	5.10
Person -year	8,050		8,151		8,146	
Cases	82		66		61	
Model1[2]	1.00		0.80 (0.57-1.10)		0.73 (0.52-1.02)	0.058
Model2	1.00		0.82 (0.59-1.15)		0.76 (0.54-1.07)	0.129
Model3[1]	1.00		0.82 (0.58-1.14)		0.79 (0.56-1.12)	0.238
Model4	1.00		0.77 (0.54-1.10)		0.69 (0.44-1.10)	0.164

HR, hazard ratio; CI, confidence interval; FVS, food variety score; TEI, total energy intake; BMI, body mass index.

*p<0.05, **p<0.01

Analysed by Cox proportional hazard regression model

Model 1[1] (adjusted for sex, survey year)

Model 1[2] (adjusted for survey year)

Model 2 (model 1 plus adjusted for living alone, education, smoking, drinking, habitual exercise)

Model 3[1] (model 2 plus adjusted for history of heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, cancer, and medical status of hypertension, hyperlipidaemia, and diabetes mellitus)

Model 3[2] (model 2 plus adjusted for medical status of hypertension, hyperlipidaemia, and diabetes mellitus)

Model 4 (model 3 plus adjusted for BMI category, TEI)

p for trend is calculated across the mean values of FVS.

Table 3. Multivariate–adjusted HRs and corresponding 95% CIs for the association of FVS with all-cause mortality by BMI group or by sex and BMI group.

| | | FVS | | | |
	1st (low)	2nd (middle)	3rd (high)	*P for trend*
All (n=2,944)				
BMI <20 group (n=371)				
FVS mean, SD	14.1　3.6	20.9　3.3	30.2　6.0	
Person-year	1,927	2,033	1,858	
Cases	37	30	29	
Model1[1]	1.00	0.60 (0.37-0.99)*	0.64 (0.39-1.06)	0.105
Model2	1.00	0.65 (0.39-1.08)	0.67 (0.40-1.12)	0.157
Model3	1.00	0.62 (0.37-1.04)	0.67 (0.40-1.13)	0.164
Model4	1.00	0.56 (0.32-0.96)*	0.50 (0.25-1.02)	0.059
BMI 20-24.9 group (n=1,911)				
FVS mean, SD	13.8　3.3	20.5　2.8	29.0　5.5	
Person-year	10,310	10,513	10,232	
Cases	164	117	142	
Model1[1]	1.00	0.74 (0.58-0.94)*	0.92 (0.74-1.16)	0.579
Model2	1.00	0.78 (0.61-0.99)*	0.99 (0.79-1.25)	0.942
Model3	1.00	0.79 (0.62-1.00)	1.02 (0.81-1.28)	0.801
Model4	1.00	0.78 (0.61-1.00)	0.98 (0.73-1.30)	0.909
BMI≧25 group (n=662)				
FVS mean, SD	12.3　3.3	19.6　3.1	28.4　5.5	
Person-year	3,514	3,601	3,340	
Cases	47	53	57	
Model1[1]	1.00	1.05 (0.71-1.56)	1.27 (0.86-1.87)	0.215
Model2	1.00	1.07 (0.72-1.59)	1.25 (0.84-1.86)	0.256
Model3	1.00	1.12 (0.75-1.68)	1.25 (0.84-1.88)	0.276
Model4	1.00	1.08 (0.70-1.66)	1.16 (0.69-1.95)	0.585

Men (n=1,481)

BMI <20 group (n=144)

FVS mean, SD	10.99	2.48	17.52	1.87	26.49	5.88	
Person-year	691		740		626		
Cases	22		21		20		
Model1[2]	1.00		0.73	(0.39-1.35)	0.76	(0.40-1.42)	0.426
Model2	1.00		0.88	(0.46-1.69)	0.84	(0.43-1.64)	0.622
Model3	1.00		0.74	(0.38-1.45)	0.85	(0.43-1.67)	0.716
Model4	1.00		0.63	(0.31-1.27)	0.53	(0.21-1.34)	0.188

BMI 20-24.9 group (n=965)

FVS mean, SD	11.9	2.5	18.3	1.5	26.0	4.3	
Person-year	5,128		5,211		4,947		
Cases	103		78		102		
Model1[2]	1.00		0.80	(0.60-1.08)	1.10	(0.83-1.45)	0.351
Model2	1.00		0.84	(0.62-1.13)	1.17	(0.89-1.54)	0.185
Model3	1.00		0.86	(0.64-1.17)	1.20	(0.91-1.58)	0.144
Model4	1.00		0.86	(0.63-1.18)	1.19	(0.85-1.68)	0.238

BMI≧25 group (n=372)

FVS mean, SD	11.09	2.64	17.61	1.92	26.12	4.74	
Person-year	1,846		1,942		1,775		
Cases	33		34		41		
Model1[2]	1.00		0.89	(0.55-1.44)	1.22	(0.77-1.94)	0.325
Model2	1.00		0.92	(0.56-1.49)	1.19	(0.74-1.91)	0.426
Model3	1.00		0.96	(0.59-1.57)	1.16	(0.71-1.91)	0.526
Model4	1.00		0.85	(0.50-1.43)	0.91	(0.49-1.69)	0.812

Women (n=1,463)

BMI <20 group (n=227)

FVS mean, SD	16.13	2.57	23.04	2.03	32.52	4.87

							P
Person-year	1,236		1,293		1,232		
Cases	15		9		9		
Model1[2]	1.00		0.39	(0.16-0.94)*	0.52	(0.21-1.28)	0.151
Model2	1.00		0.36	(0.13-0.97)*	0.68	(0.27-1.68)	0.339
Model3	1.00		0.37	(0.13-1.04)	0.62	(0.23-1.65)	0.297
Model4	1.00		0.35	(0.12-1.06)	0.54	(0.14-2.06)	0.339
BMI 20-24.9 group (n=946)							
FVS mean, SD	15.7	3.0	22.7	1.7	31.9	5.1	
Person-year	5,182		5,302		5,285		
Cases	61		39		40		
Model1[2]	1.00		0.63	(0.42-0.94)*	0.64	(0.43-0.96)*	0.031
Model2	1.00		0.67	(0.44-1.01)	0.69	(0.46-1.05)	0.088
Model3	1.00		0.67	(0.44-1.02)	0.72	(0.48-1.10)	0.136
Model4	1.00		0.62	(0.40-0.96)*	0.58	(0.33-1.00)	0.049
BMI≧25 group (n=290)							
FVS mean, SD	13.8	3.4	22.3	2.3	31.4	5.0	
Person-year	1,668		1,659		1,565		
Cases	14		19		16		
Model1[2]	1.00		1.34	(0.67-2.69)	1.34	(0.65-2.78)	0.431
Model2	1.00		1.49	(0.72-3.10)	1.33	(0.61-2.90)	0.483
Model3	1.00		1.46	(0.69-3.10)	1.26	(0.56-2.81)	0.597
Model4	1.00		1.96	(0.85-4.51)	2.18	(0.75-6.30)	0.162

HR, hazard ratio; CI, confidence interval; FVS, food variety score; TEI, total energy intake; BMI, body mass index.

*P<0.05, **P<0.01

Analysed by Cox proportional hazard regression model

Model 1[1] (adjusted for sex, survey year)

Model 1[2] (adjusted for survey year)

Model 2 (model 1 plus adjusted for living alone, education, smoking, drinking, habitual exercise)

Model 3 (model 2 plus adjusted for history of heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, cancer, and medical status of hypertension, hyperlipidaemia, and diabetes mellitus)

Model 4 (model 3 plus adjusted for TEI)