

# 17<sup>th</sup> GLOBAL DIETICIANS AND NUTRITIONISTS ANNUAL MEETING

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## A Mediterranean diet enriched with omega 3-polyunsaturated fatty acids in the management of pediatric asthma: A randomized controlled trial

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The change in dietary patterns has contributed to the rise in obesity and asthma in children. Both chronic diseases are associated with co-morbidities, considerable disability, poor quality of life and increase in medical costs. Research studies have demonstrated that an elevated BMI is related to an increase in asthma risk and development of future exacerbations, less asthma control and an increase need for medication use. The purpose of this Randomized Controlled Trial is to investigate the effect of a Mediterranean diet enriched with fatty fish on asthma in Greek children. This is the first announcement of baseline results for this intervention study. Sample consists of 72 children aged 5-12 years with doctor-diagnosed mild-asthma; of which 54.2% are male and 45.8% females were recruited in this study. Children were randomized equally into two groups. The intervention group is instructed to consume 2 fatty fish meals (at least 150 g cooked fish/meal) per week over a period of 6 months. And the control group, their usual diet. Statistical analysis of baseline data reveals that 64% of children are normal height and 36% are tall. Regarding bodyweight, 1% of children are severely underweight, 3% are slightly underweight, 57% are normal weight, 28% are overweight and 11% are obese, according to Hellenic pediatric growth charts. This finding is significant since BMI seems to play a major role on asthma outcome in children. The effect of weight reduction in overweight asthmatic children might be of great value for current treatment guidelines and in alleviation of asthma symptoms.

### Biography

Maria Papamichael is a registered Dietician who has dedicated her life in educating people the importance of good nutrition and exercise in the prevention and management of disease as well as in improving health and well-being. Being an asthma sufferer since childhood, has motivated her to undertake a PhD research project at La Trobe University to investigate the prophylactic potential of a Mediterranean diet enriched with fatty fish in the management of asthma in children.

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