

ORIGINAL

## Lifestyle in older adults and nursing intervention during the COVID-19 pandemic in North Lima

### Estilo de vida en adultos mayores y la intervención de enfermería durante la pandemia del COVID-19 en Lima Norte

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#### ABSTRACT

The lifestyle of older adults worldwide has undergone restricted changes due to the pandemic, where their routine activities have been modified, generating health problems. Therefore, the objective of this research is to determine the lifestyle of older adults and the nursing intervention during the COVID-19 pandemic in North Lima. This is a quantitative, descriptive-cross-sectional study, with a population of 206 participants over 60 years of age who answered a questionnaire on sociodemographic aspects and the FANTASTICO instrument. The results show that of older adults aged 60 to 90 years, 10,2 % have a low lifestyle and 19,9 % have a fantastic lifestyle. In conclusion, educational counseling on lifestyle management at home should be provided for older adults, as this will allow them to maintain their healthy lifestyle.

**Keywords:** Lifestyle; Aged; Nursing Care; Mental Health.

#### RESUMEN

El estilo de vida a nivel mundial cambio drásticamente en el adulto mayor producto a la pandemia, donde sus actividades rutinarias se modificaron a causa de ello generando problemas en su salud, por lo que el objetivo de la investigación es determinar el estilo de vida en adultos mayores y la intervención de enfermería durante la pandemia del COVID-19 en Lima Norte. Es un estudio cuantitativo, descriptivo-transversal, con una población de 206 participantes mayores de 60 años que respondieron un cuestionario de aspectos sociodemográficos y el instrumento FANTASTICO. En los resultados se observó que los adultos mayores de 60 a 90 años, el 10,2 % tienen un estilo de vida bajo y el 19,9 % tienen un estilo de vida fantástico. En conclusión, se debe realizar brindar consejerías educativas sobre el manejo del estilo de vida en el hogar para los adultos mayores, ya que ello va a permitir mantener su estilo de vida saludable.

**Palabras clave:** Estilo de Vida; Viejo; Atención de Enfermería; Salud Mental.

#### INTRODUCTION

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), a healthy lifestyle is defined as “a general way of life based on the interaction between living conditions in a broad sense and individual patterns of behavior determined by sociocultural factors and personal characteristics”.<sup>(1)</sup> The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) indicates that among the seven main diseases affecting older adults are chronic diseases with high prevalence: high blood pressure, overweight, joint problems, and cardiovascular disorders, all of which are

related to poor eating habits, lack of physical activity, and family neglect. As the situation will significantly increase the demand for care and attention, this should be based on integrated approaches that help older adults maintain their functional capacities.<sup>(2)</sup>

Given that lifestyle includes a set of behaviors that a person normally performs consciously and voluntarily.<sup>(3)</sup> Therefore, in the case of older adults, who are characterized by being over 60 years of age, they experience molecular and cellular changes, a decline in physical and mental abilities that require functional adaptability and lifestyle changes to reduce the risk of disease or death;<sup>(4)</sup> and often, the first signs of aging affect the musculoskeletal system, the eyes, followed by the ears, which begin to change in early adulthood.<sup>(5)†</sup>

Thus, during the confinement stage many households suffered mobility restrictions and abrupt changes in living habits; many people had to reinvent themselves as a coping method, but many were drawn into the loss of routines in the retired collective.<sup>(6)</sup> Highlighting that the importance of improving lifestyles in older adults is related to a better quality of life and reducing risk factors for developing complications of chronic diseases and thus increasing longevity.<sup>(7)</sup>

In Asia, a study conducted in Japan on 56 older adults living in the community of Usuki, a rural town in Oita Prefecture, Japan. It was revealed to be the first study to demonstrate lifestyle factors during the COVID-19 pandemic among older adults living in the community. The findings show that the pandemic has negatively affected physical activity among older adults living alone in Japan.<sup>(8)</sup>

In Central America; in Cuba, a study of 268 older adults revealed that 24 % have an unhealthy lifestyle and 76 % had a healthy lifestyle.<sup>(9)</sup> In North America another study conducted in Mexico where 35 seniors living with DM2 in the city of Toluca were surveyed revealed that 65,7 % as healthy, 28,6 % very healthy and 5,7 % unhealthy; categorizing their lifestyle as healthy and very healthy, but they have very specific risk factors and characteristics that require separate and specific nursing care compared to other people living with DM. This suggests that adults and the elderly living with diabetes should lead a healthy lifestyle.<sup>(10)</sup>

In Europe, a study conducted in Spain on 119 older adults during COVID-19 confinement revealed that 23,7 % of the older adults presented dietary changes during the confinement period with a tendency towards higher consumption of healthy foods, with lower consumption of foods of less nutritional interest and increased practice of cooking at home.<sup>(11)</sup> Another study in the Netherlands of 3107 people aged 55-85 years revealed that people with a healthy lifestyle had a 10,6 % slower decrease in walking speed, a 10,8 % slower increase in depressive symptoms, a 1,8 % slower decrease in cognitive functioning and a 4,9 % slower decrease in social contacts compared to people without or with a healthy lifestyle factor.<sup>(12)</sup>

In South America, a study conducted in Ecuador including 35 older adults in the province of Cotopaxi, indicated that the good lifestyle predominated with a significant difference in relation to the fantastic and regular lifestyle, in food most consume hypo sodium and low-fat diets, maintain an adequate weight, occasional self-medication and 43 % present body pain that hinders their work a little.<sup>(13)</sup>

In Peru, a study conducted in Lima of 82 older adults revealed that 36,6 % have unhealthy nutrition, 58,5 % unhealthy and 4,9 % have healthy nutrition; having that, in terms of measurements, we found that unhealthy lifestyle predominated; in terms of nutrition; a healthy lifestyle prevails in the measure of physical activity.<sup>(14)</sup>

Therefore, the objective of the research is to determine the lifestyle in older adults and the nursing intervention during the COVID-19 pandemic in North Lima.

## METHOD

### Research type and Design

The research work has a quantitative approach, with a non-experimental descriptive-transversal methodology.<sup>(15)</sup>

### Population

The population consisted of a total of 206 elderly participants of both sexes attending a health facility.

### Inclusion Criteria

- Participants attending a health care facility.
- Participants who have more than 3 visits to a health care facility.
- Participants who voluntarily agreed to participate in the study.

### Technique and Instrument

The technique used was the survey, with the FANTASTICO data collection instrument.

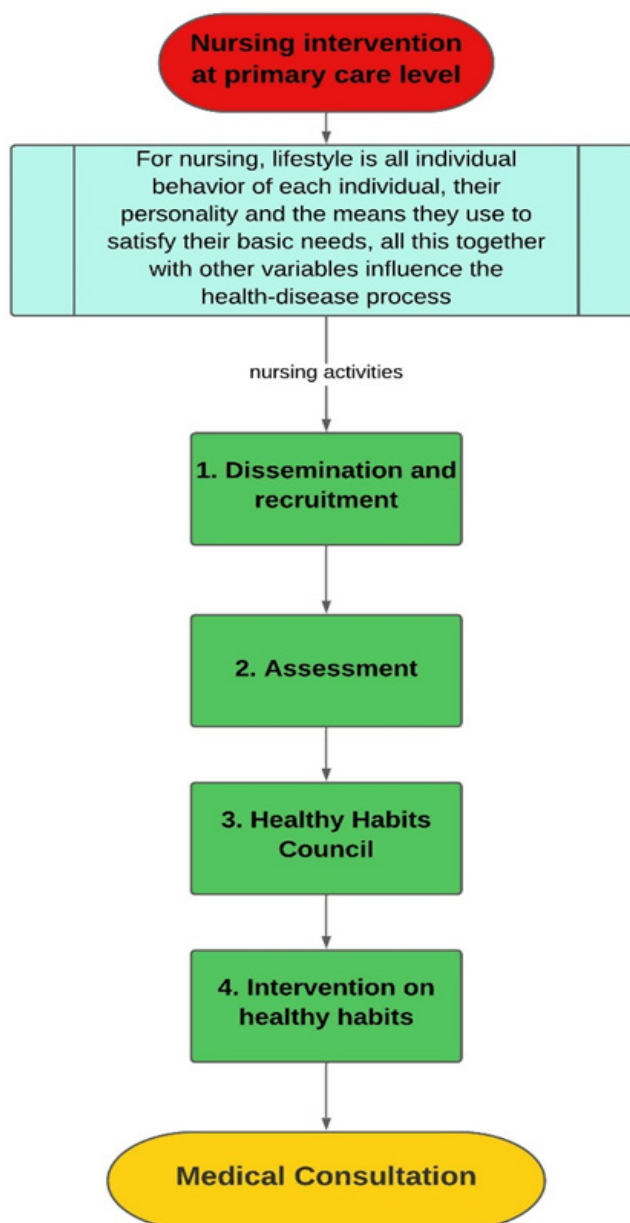
The FANTASTICO instrument, administered to assess how good your lifestyle is, consists of 30 items that are indicated in 10 dimensions, F: family and friends, A: associativity and physical activity, N: nutrition, T: toxicity, A: alcohol, S: sleep and stress, T: personality type and activities, I: inner image, C: health control and sexuality and finally, O: order; which are evaluated with a Likert-type scale where "0 = Never", "1 =

Sometimes”, “2 = Always”. The final score is multiplied by 2, to obtain a final range from 0 to 120, where the ranges are appreciated quantitatively where “0 to 46 = is in the danger zone”, “47 to 72 = somewhat low, you could improve”, “73 to 84= adequate, you are fine”, “85 to 102= good job, you are on the right track”, “103 to 120 = congratulations, you have a fantastic lifestyle”.<sup>(16)</sup>

Regarding its reliability, it was carried out using Cronbach’s Alpha obtaining a score of ( score of 0,941 ( $\alpha > 0,8$ ), which is reliable for the study.

### Place and Application of the Instrument

The survey was conducted among the elderly population in the district of San Martín de Porres who attend a health facility, in which prior arrangements were made with the head of the facility to carry out the study, in addition to providing the necessary knowledge about the research to be conducted.



**Figure 1.** Flowchart on the intervention performed by the nursing professional at the first level of care on the lifestyle of older adults

In this flowchart, the intervention performed by the nursing professional in the first level of care on the lifestyle of older adults is carried out in 4 processes:

1. Dissemination and recruitment:

- In this process it is important the diffusion of activities in which is carried out in the first

level of care, since it prioritizes the educational actions in the older adult population, where the interventions must be flexible and adapted to the reality of the life habits of the older adults.

2. Assessment:

- Prior to each intervention, an assessment of the person's situation in terms of the main components of a healthy lifestyle should be carried out, including (anthropometric measurements, risk factors, lifestyle habits and degree of motivation to change).

3. Advice on healthy habits:

- Every nursing professional should do it in a brief way, where the healthy habits related to nutrition and physical activity have a motivating proposal for change, and that allows improving the lifestyle of the person.

4. Intervention on healthy habits:

- These interventions that can be performed by the nursing professional, will allow the person to have clear reasons and benefits that can have a healthy behavior, where exploring the habits that previously performed and that can be modified in the course of the timely follow-up that will be given, will allow the person to obtain healthy habits in a more appropriate way to their environment.

Finally, after the nursing professionals conclude their intervention, the person will go for a medical consultation in which it will become evident what healthy habits the older adult follows and how we can improve their lifestyle in the long term.

## RESULTS

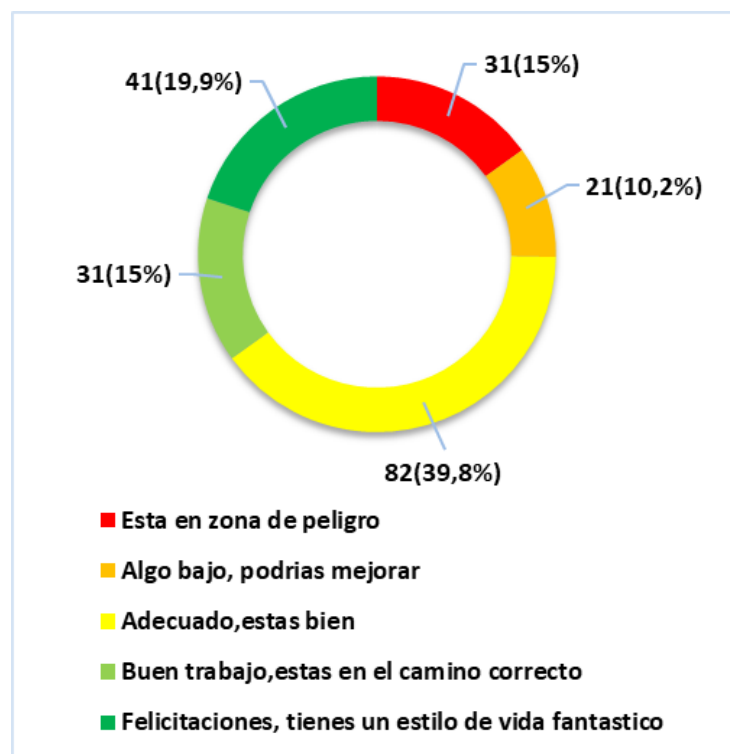


Figure 2. Lifestyle in adults during the COVID - 19 pandemic in Northern Lima

In figure 2, we can observe that, 15 % (n=31) of the participants are in danger zone in terms of their lifestyle, 10,2 % (n=21) are somewhat low, you could improve in their lifestyle, 39,8 % (n=82) are with an adequate lifestyle, 15 % (n=31) are doing a good job in terms of their lifestyle and 19,9 % (n=41) have a fantastic lifestyle.

In figure 3, it can be seen that, in relation to sex, in the male sex, 54,8 % (n=17) their lifestyle is in the danger zone, 28,6 % (n=6) their lifestyle is somewhat low but can be improved, 42,7 % (n=35) their lifestyle is adequate, 77,4 % (n=24) are doing a good job in their lifestyle and 19,5 % (n=8) have a fantastic lifestyle.

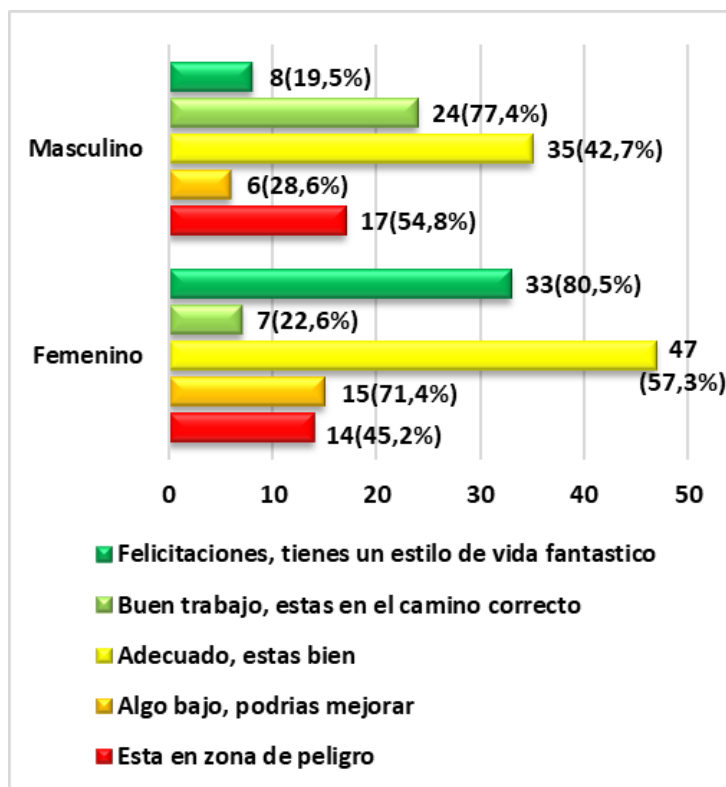


Figure 3. Lifestyle in relation to sex in older adults attending a primary health care facility during the COVID - 19 pandemic in North Lima

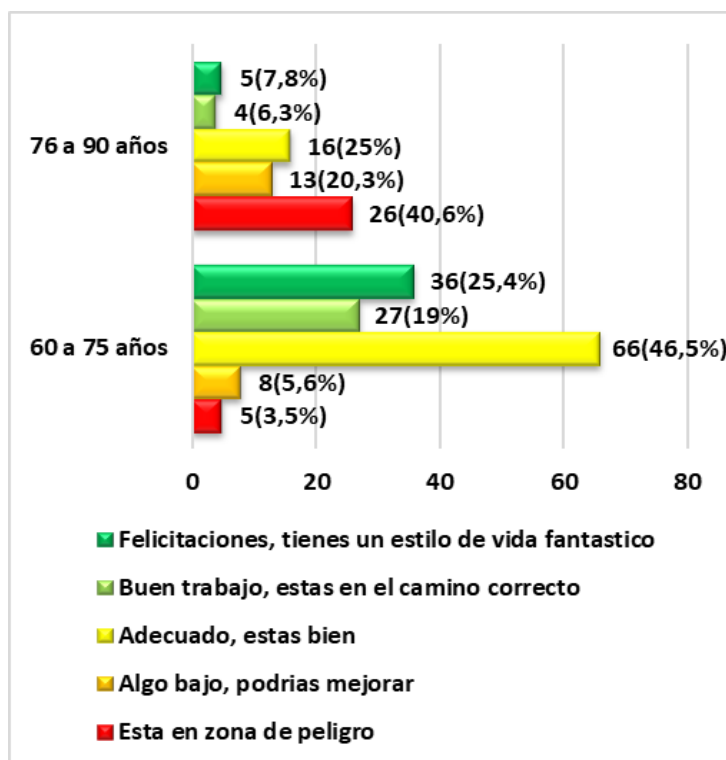


Figure 4. Lifestyle in relation to age of older adults attending a primary health care facility during the COVID - 19 pandemic in North Lima

In figure 4, we can observe that, 7,8 % (n=5) of the older adults between the ages of 76 to 90 years have a fantastic lifestyle, 6,3 % (n=4) are doing a good job in their lifestyle, 25 % (n=16) have an adequate lifestyle, 20,3 % (n=13) have a somewhat low lifestyle and 40,6 % (n=26) their lifestyle is in the danger zone; as for older adults between the ages of 60 to 75 years, 25,4 % (n=36) have a fantastic lifestyle, 19 % (n=27) are doing a good

job in their lifestyle, 46,5 %(n=66) have an adequate lifestyle, 5,6 %(n=8) have a somewhat low lifestyle and 3,5 %(n=5) their lifestyle is in danger zone.

## DISCUSSION

In the present investigation, the perspective of lifestyle and the intervention that the nursing professional performs in the person to have a healthy lifestyle, giving emphasis to the physical and mental health of the elderly person during the COVID-19 pandemic was revealed.

In the results obtained in the study, it is observed that most of the older adults have an adequate lifestyle, we can interpret that, within the home, the older adults have not been able to perform their routine activities that they performed before the pandemic, where passive physical activity, adequate nutrition, good quality sleep and social interaction with the family, is limited, therefore, older adults tend to become depressed or are worried about not performing their activities that they used to perform; Although, from a positive point of view, the psychoemotional support of the family will play an important role for the older adult to have an adequate health, since they are vulnerable to any disease and even more so when they do not perform any activity due to the pandemic. In <sup>(7)</sup>, they argue that the family will have an important role in improving the lifestyle of the older adult, since it is related to the increase in the quality of life, since it allows reducing the risks that the older adult may develop due to certain complications that may occur due to some disease and thus increase the years of life of the older adult.

In the results of lifestyle in relation to sex, it is observed that the female sex presents a better lifestyle, this, we can interpret it, in that, factors such as care within the home, the relationship of domestic chores and the level of studies, makes the lifestyle in the female sex is maintained adequately, on the other hand, in the male sex, to present many responsibilities inside and outside the home, as head of the family, obstructs their activities that allow them to maintain their adequate lifestyle. In a study, they argue that the male sex, are the ones who present more inadequate habits, and even more when they are young, on the other hand, in the female sex, they have a better lifestyle, in relation to their healthy habits that they carry out.

## CONCLUSIONS

It is concluded that motivational talks should be given during home visits to older adults and their families, since it will allow a more adequate communication in the face of the problems presented by the older adult.

It is concluded that health strategies should be implemented for the elderly in the performance of activities within the home to avoid or minimize possible risks to their mental health.

It is concluded that counseling on healthy eating should be carried out, since older adults, when not performing their routine activities, will present a decrease in their body weight as a result of inactivity.

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# CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

# FINANCING

None.

# AUTHORSHIP CONTRIBUTION

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