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## Does a Mediterranean dietary pattern enriched with fatty fish improve respiratory function and reduce asthma symptoms in children? A randomized controlled trial

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**Background & Aim:** Globally, asthma has rapidly become the most frequent allergic disease in children. It causes significant burden and is the most common reason for hospitalisation, absence from school and work for sufferers and their parents/carers, respectively. There is no cure for asthma; it can only be controlled by medication. Emerging evidence from observational studies indicate that diet and lifestyle play a role in the aetiology and management, with potential for a protective effect of a Mediterranean diet. However, randomized controlled trials are lacking. We aim to investigate whether fatty fish consumption as part of a Mediterranean dietary pattern improves pulmonary function and reduces asthma symptoms in children.

**Method:** A parallel Randomized Controlled Trial of 6 months duration is being conducted in asthmatic children, aged 5-12 years attending a paediatric respiratory clinic in Athens, Greece. The intervention includes two fatty fish meals (150 g cooked) per week as part of the Greek Mediterranean diet. The control group will consume their usual diet. Assessments at baseline and 6 month follow-up include pulmonary function using spirometry (FEV<sub>1</sub>) and exhaled nitric oxide, asthma symptoms using the Asthma Control Questionnaire (ACQ), quality of life by the Paediatric Asthma Quality of life Questionnaire (PAQLQ), medication use and days hospitalized. A Food Frequency Questionnaire will be used to assess dietary intake and adherence to the Mediterranean dietary pattern will be assessed using the KIDMED index.

**Applications:** This study is important in establishing the effect of a Mediterranean diet enriched with fatty fish in the management of asthma in children.

### 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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