

15<sup>th</sup> International Conference on

# Clinical Nutrition

May 24-26, 2018 | Vienna, Austria

## Evaluation of nutrition educational-counseling interventions in controlling of autism symptoms and caregiver's empowerment

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Autism is a neurodevelopmental disorder diagnosed at the age of three, characterized by repetitive and characteristic patterns of behaviour and difficulties with social communication and interaction. Autism can affect children's growth from many aspects such as nutrition, which may influence their quality of life. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effect of nutrition educational-counseling interventions in controlling of autism symptoms and caregiver's empowerment. This case-control study was performed by randomized selection of 10 caregivers who participate in educational sessions as case group and 10 for control group, completing pre-test questionnaire, designing and running educational-counseling sessions, completing post-test questionnaire for case group and statistical analysis. This study suggests that autistic children's caregivers play the most crucial role in controlling of Gastro-Intestinal (GI) symptoms and the behavioral symptoms will improve by increasing dietary variation. Furthermore, caregiver's education influences dietary supplement consumption (p-value = 0.025), restricted Casein Free (CF) and Gluten Free (GF) diet adherence (p-value = 0.025) and food allergies occurrence (p-value = 0.043). According to the effect of nutrition educational-counseling interventions in increasing dietary variation, gastro-intestinal and behavioural symptoms improvement, it can be concluded that implementation of nutrition educational-counseling intervention will enhance the education of caregivers and may have beneficial effects on their empowerment, in controlling of GI and behavioural symptoms in autistic children.

### Biography

Kimia Moiniafshari has received her Degree in Nutrition from Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Science and is an MSc student in Sports Nutrition. She is an Autism Researcher and has accepted papers in nutritional strategies for autism management and has translated the book "Eating for Autism" to increase the educational status of caregivers in order to improve autistic children's dietary pattern and quality of life.

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