

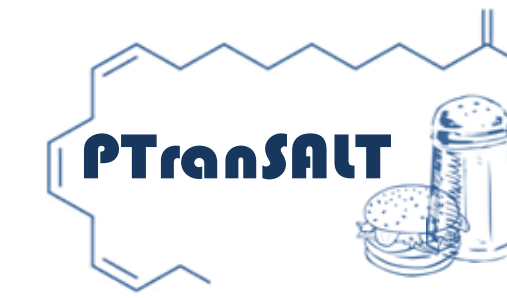
Cream crackers vs. "Maria" cookies: Which are the main differences?

Tânia Gonçalves Albuquerque^{1,2}, Mafalda Alexandra Silva¹, M. Beatriz P.P. Oliveira², Helena S. Costa^{1,2}

¹Unidade de Investigação e Desenvolvimento, Departamento de Alimentação e Nutrição, Instituto Nacional de Saúde Doutor Ricardo Jorge, I.P.

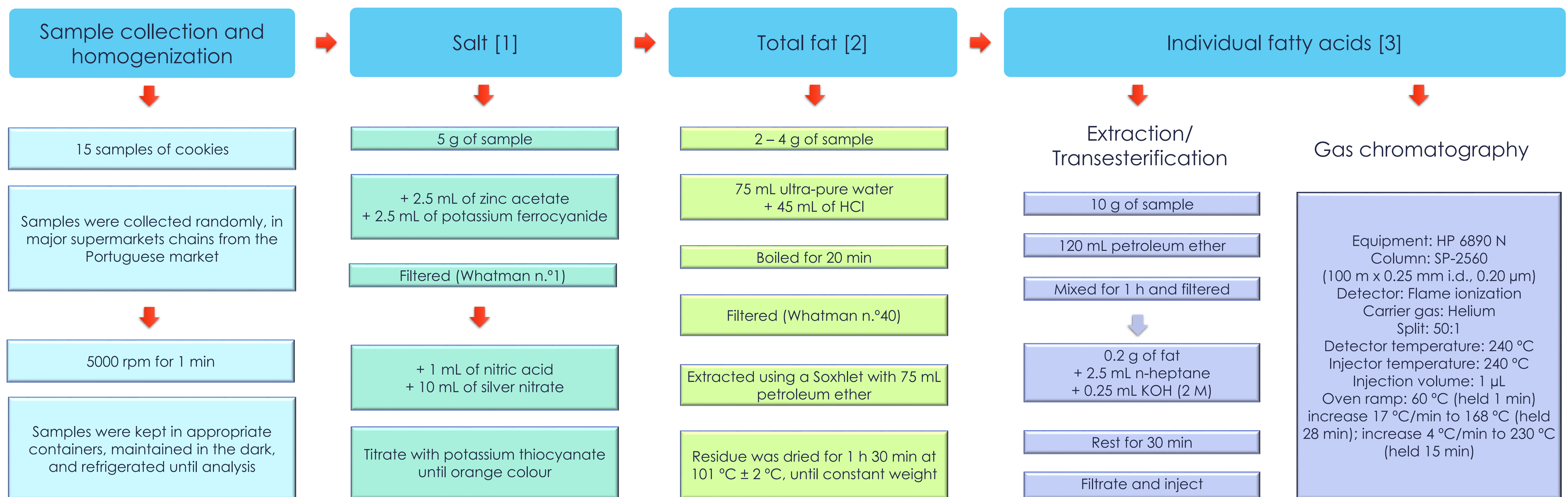
²REQUIMTE-LAQV/Faculdade de Farmácia da Universidade do Porto

tania.albuquerque@insa.min-saude.pt



Introduction/Aim

Cookies are widely consumed especially by young people. Nowadays there is a wide range of this type of products, and every day new options are available in the market. These foodstuffs are generally recognized as a source of unhealthy nutrients, such as salt and fat, namely saturated and *trans* fatty acids. The excessive intake of those nutrients is linked with an enhanced risk for the development of several chronic diseases. The aim of this work was to determine salt, total fat and fatty acids composition of "Maria" cookies and cream crackers, as well as to estimate the benefit/risk associated with their consumption.



Concerning salt content (Figure 1A), cream crackers have the highest value (1.82 g/100 g, brand H).

For cream crackers the total fat content (Figure 1B) varied between 10.3 and 23.0 g/100 g, while for "Maria" cookies it ranged from 8.73 to 19.5 g/100 g.

The saturated fatty acids were the highest in 6 cream cracker brands and in 4 "Maria" cookies brands (Figure 1C).

A higher variability (2.89 to 14.8 g/100 g) between the monounsaturated fatty acids content was observed in "Maria" cookies.

Trans fatty acids ranged from 29.2 to 82.4 mg/100 g (cream crackers brand H) and from 24.5 to 73.2 mg/100 g ("Maria" cookies brand C).



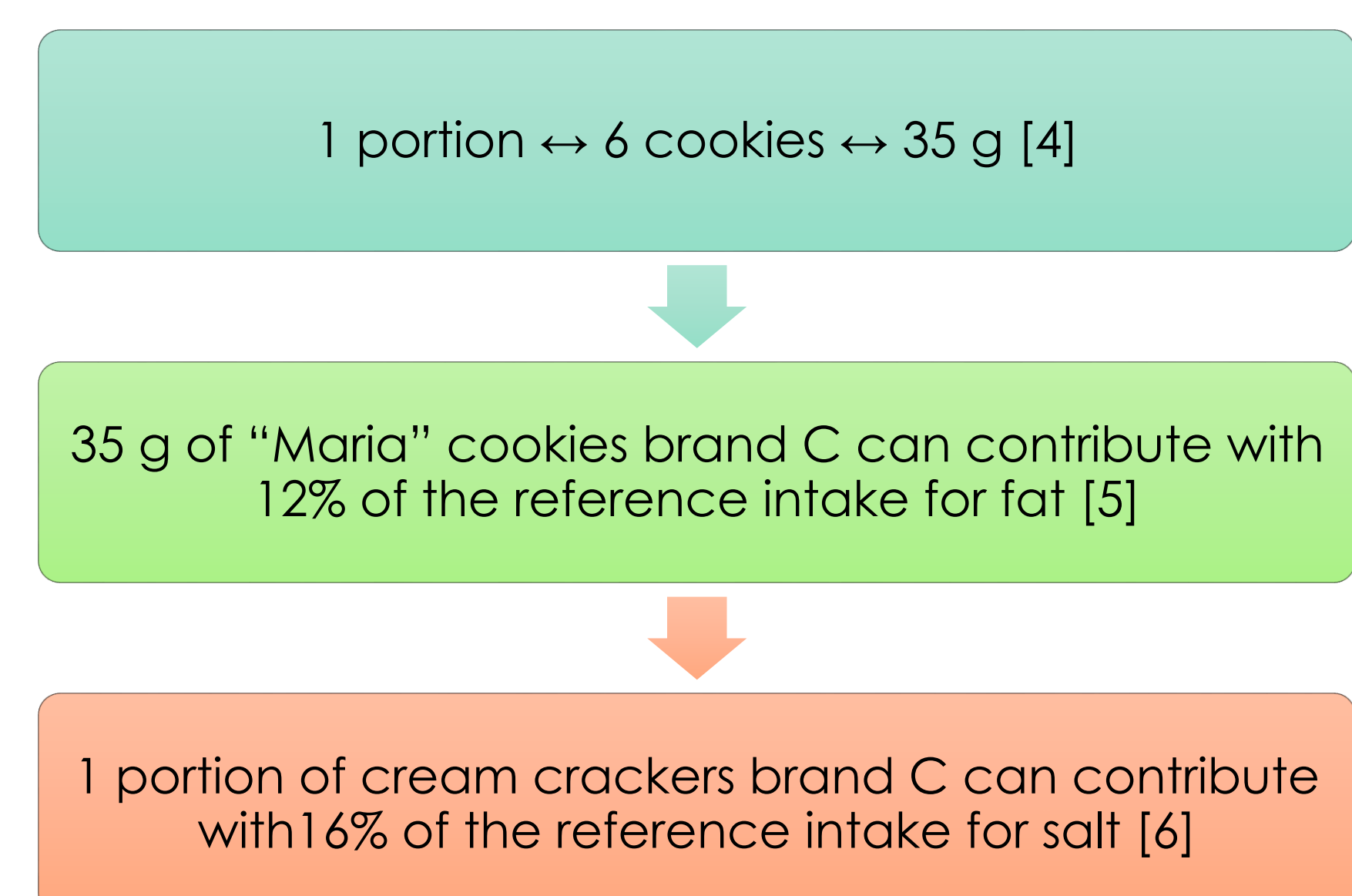
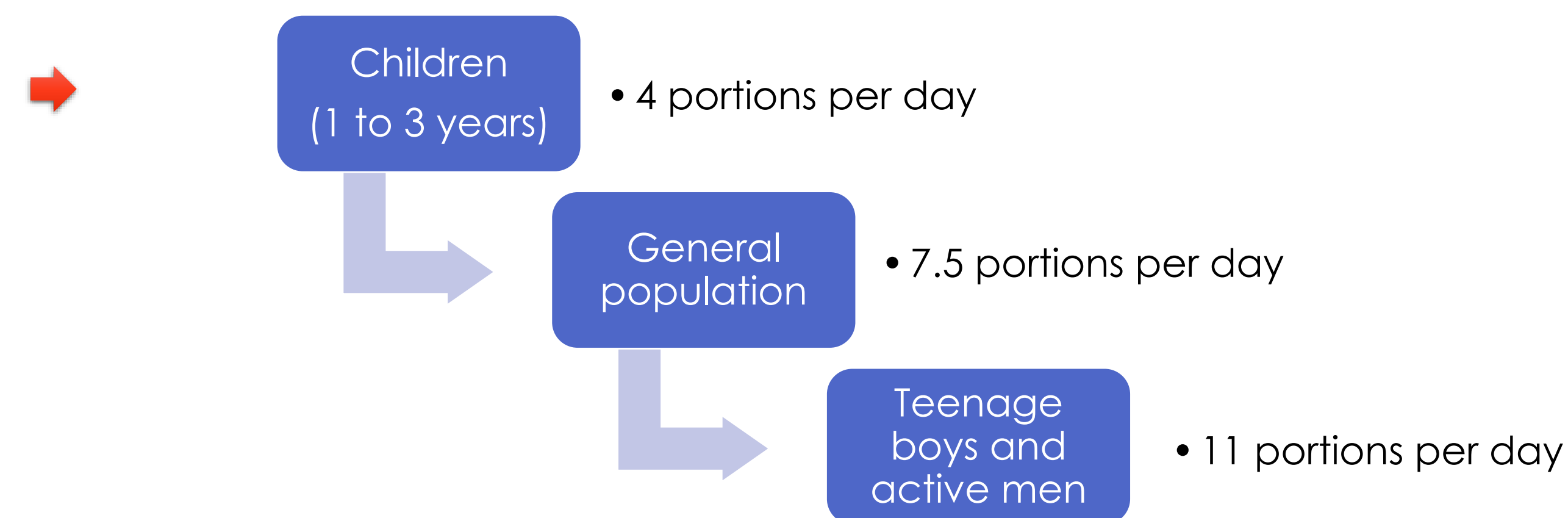
Figure 1. Salt (A), total fat (B) and fatty acids (C) contents (g/100 g) of the analysed cookies. SFA – saturated fatty acids; MUFA – monounsaturated fatty acids; PUFA – polyunsaturated fatty acids.



Figure 2. Mediterranean diet food wheel. Source: <https://nutrimento.pt/noticias/new-mediterranean-diet-food-guide/> and <http://www.alimentacaosaudavel.dgs.pt/roda-dos-alimentos-mediterranica/>.

Potato, cereal and cereal products

According with the Mediterranean diet food wheel (Figure 2), an intake of 4 to 11 daily portions is recommended for this food group



Conclusions

The analysed cream crackers present higher levels of total fat and salt, and goals must be established to allow the gradual reformulation of these foods. Moreover, the analysed cookies, in general, continue to present high levels of saturated fat. However, in this work it was observed that some cookies present higher amounts of unsaturated fatty acids, which can contribute to the prevention of chronic diseases and reduce the health impact related to the consumption of this type of food.

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