Eating Behaviors Changed by Life Events Among Older Adults: A Thematic Analysis
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Summary
Background: Healthy aging is due to older adults’ eating behavior affected by their life events throughout their life course (Carol, 2005); however, the relationships between eating behaviors (EBs) and life events (LEs) are not well known. This qualitative study reported EBs affected by LEs among community-dwelling older adults. LEs related to occupation, household size, and health led to various changes in EBs including meal schedule, food choice, meal preparation, cooking, and eating situation. LEs leading healthy eating behaviors should be further investigated.

Objectives
This qualitative study reported EBs affected by LEs among community-dwelling older adults.

Methods
How did we collect data?
We conducted individual semi-structured interviews in three suburban areas of Tokyo, Japan in 2022. Using convenience sampling, 27 older adults (mean age 77 ±4.8 years old, male 48%) participated in the interviews.

How did we analyze data?
1) Semi structured interview
   a) What did you eat yesterday?
   b) Do you usually eat xxx for breakfast?
   c) When and why did you begin to eat xxx?
2) Coding EBs and LEs

Results & discussions
Diverse eating behaviors (food preparation, eating, and environment) were affected by life events.

Especially, the categories of occupation-, household size-, and health-related life events affected various eating behavior changes.

Conclusions
Occupation, household size, and health-related LEs led to diverse EB changes.

LEs leading eating behaviors should be further investigated.

A quantitative survey, asking eating behavior categories and affected life events
Considering nutrition education to avoid unhealthy eating behavior occurred frequently in a life event

Life event categories
1. Education
2. Occupation
3. Household size
4. Health
5. Leisure
6. Accommodation
7. COVID-19

Examples of life events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life event categories</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Education</td>
<td>1) Food choice: Western style meal, Balanced diet, Low alcohol intake</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2) Meal frequency, meal-time: Having breakfast, Having snacks, Meal timing</td>
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<td>3) Shopping</td>
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<td>4) Having meals prepared away from home: Ready-to-eat meals, Eating out</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5) Cooking frequency: More frequent cooking, Home made foods</td>
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<td>6) Improving cooking process: Big-batch cooking, Food preservation, Routinely clean up</td>
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<td>7) Eating situation: Eating together frequency</td>
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* Numbers show extracted code numbers (totally 112 codes from 27 older adults).

Acknowledgement
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References