



### **DIVERSITY PROBLEM OF DIET MENUS PREPARED AS PART OF MEDICAL TOURISM AND ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION RECOMMENDATIONS THEREFOR**

**Aysu ALTAŞ**

Assistant Professor, Aksaray University Faculty of Tourism  
E-mail: ahatipoglu@aksaray.edu.tr

#### **Abstract**

Food and beverage services are essential for tourism sector and people have gradually differentiating food and beverage choices which vary from person to person. Said choices cause difficulties particularly for medical tourism establishments. Because people are needed to impose restriction on their food and beverages particularly when it comes to their health, but they do not accept any restriction on appearance and taste of foods; they refuse to consume the same foods; and they ask for both low-calorie and substantial foods. The fact that people particularly travelling as part of medical tourism have so many variables about food and beverages is the most frequent problem encountered by the establishments, which needs to be immediately solved.

This study about diversity problem of diet menus prepared as part of medical tourism is a theoretical study and was prepared by compiling data obtained from literature review. Things that are to be done about preparing good, substantial, low-calorie and tasty foods-beverages for people travelling as part of medical tourism were provided as solution recommendations at the end of the study. It is aimed that the study is a guide for people interested in this subject and contributes to the literature.

**Key Words:** Medical Tourism, Food and Beverage Establishments, Diet Menus, Medical Tourism Establishments.

## Introduction

Medical tourism covers a wide range of health-related travels from hair transplantation to dental treatment, cosmetic surgery and in vitro fertilization. People may engage in medical tourism to restore their health or due to their desire to maintain their health status (Albayrak, 2012: 105). The main motivation that leads individuals to medical tourism is the desire to maintain or restore their health. When individuals are not able to reach the point which they desire in relation to their health in their own environment, they leave their place of residence for a certain period of time to receive necessary services for their health. Accommodation and food and beverage are the primary services in this sense. Within the framework of medical tourism, the said services are provided by establishments such as hotels, resorts, motels and guesthouses as well as hospitals, hot spring centers and various cure centers (Selvi, 2008: 275).

Eating and drinking are among the most basic needs of people. The tourism industry can provide services for numerous people from different nationalities and with different eating and drinking habits at the same time (Hatipoğlu, 2010: 8). In this context, food and beverage services are among indispensables of the tourism industry. However, when it comes to medical health, food and beverage establishments get into a vicious cycle in terms of preparing nice-looking, filling, low-calorie and tasty food and beverages especially in cases where individuals need to diet in order to maintain or restore their health. When it comes to enabling guests who need to lose weight quit their old habits in particular, it is a quite difficult task to prepare food and beverages which appeal to senses of individuals and have the looks, smell and taste which will provide them with physical satisfaction as well as mental satisfaction. This study addresses points to consider when preparing diet menus and attempts to explain what can be done to diversify diet menus in bullet points.

## Medical Tourism

According to the Medical Tourism Coordination Board of The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Turkey, medical tourism is individuals' visiting another country other than the one where they reside in order to receive protective, therapeutic, rehabilitating and remedial health services ([www.satark.gov.tr](http://www.satark.gov.tr)). According to another definition, medical tourism is the set of events and relations arising from individuals' traveling for a certain period of time (usually 21 days) to a facility based on natural sources in order to maintain or restore their health and receiving cures and meeting their accommodation, nutrition and entertainment needs (Boz, 20014: 132).

The Medical Tourism Coordination Board of The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Turkey notes that medical tourism covers concepts such as thermal medical tourism, senior tourism (third age tourism) and disabled tourism ([www.satark.gov.tr](http://www.satark.gov.tr)). In this context, individuals may prefer various treatment methods within the scope of medical tourism such as balneology, acupuncture, aromatherapy, uvalism, cure, balneotherapy, hot spring treatment, thalassotherapy, climatotherapy, hydrotherapy, inhalation, speleotherapy and peloidotherapy. Regardless of their preferred treatment method, individuals will surely receive food and beverage services in the establishment which they visit for medical tourism. However, some individuals need to follow a specific nutrition plan. The hospitality establishment and the

kitchen personnel have important tasks in relation to preparing and maintaining such specific nutrition plans.

In this sense a special diet is a diet orienting at adopting an appropriate food intake for a special pathological situation whether temporary or chronic and it differs to a certain extent with normal nutrition. In daily language “going on a diet” generally means avoiding eating too much just for losing weight or being careful what to eat. During a serious diet it is necessary to do calculations by paying regard to habits and individual pleasures that will not create deficiencies while fulfilling the nutrition necessities required by the state of health. Nowadays a lot of chiefs write cookbooks that take into consideration diabetes, heart diseases and the gastronomic views of obese patients (Larousse Gastronomie, 2005: 766) and cook the meals as mentioned in accommodation facilities that provide service as part of health tourism.

### **Concepts of Diet, Menu and Diet Menu**

Diet is defined as a nutrition plan, slimdown or regime followed in order to maintain or restore health ([www.tdk.gov.tr](http://www.tdk.gov.tr)). According to another definition, diet is the entirety of the food hygiene rules which allow for keeping the health at the best level (Larousse Gastronomie, 2005: 298). Within the scope of medical tourism, Selvi (2008) considers dietary practices as supporting practices along with health training, regulation of everyday activities, behaviour modification training and psychological support management.

Menu is defined as a detailed list of the food presented or the dish offered in a restaurant (Rızaoğlu and Hançer, 2005: 8). According to another definition, a menu is a full list of food and beverages available and sold in a restaurant (Yörükoğlu and Yörükoğlu, 1998: 97). In Turkish, the words “mönü” and “menü” are generally used interchangeably and this leads to a contradiction of terms. In Turkish, while “menü” refers to a list of commands or choices ([www.tdk.gov.tr](http://www.tdk.gov.tr)), the word “mönü” should be used when food and beverages are in question.

A diet menu however is a body of rules about food and drinks that should be obeyed in certain periods which is prepared completely in line with the individual’s needs and just for that individual, using as a base features like the individuals’ ages, sexes, heights, weights, jobs, genetic diseases, undergone operations and constantly used medications.

### **The Problem of Diet Menu Diversity in the Literature**

The literature review concerning the problem of diet menu diversity consists of several stages. In this respect, firstly theses and then the articles written on this issue were examined. In order to find the theses written on the problem of diet menu diversity, “diyet menü (diet menu)” was written as key word into the search engine of the National Thesis Centre of the Turkish Council of High Education and it was seen that the key word was not found in any title. It was thought that the confusion resulting from the words menü and mönü may have caused this result and thus, the search was repeated with the key word of “diyet mönü (diet menu) but no results were found once again.

Later on, the search was expanded by using only the word “diet” and 392 theses having the word diet in the title were reached. 235 of them were graduate theses, 83 of them were medical specialty theses, 67 were doctoral theses and 7 were medical subspecialty theses. When the

fields in which 392 theses were written were examined, it was seen that the field where the highest number of theses related to diet were written was expectedly nutrition and dietetics (140). This field is followed by bio-chemistry (53), food engineering (21), paediatrics (17), endocrinology and metabolism (17), aquaculture (14), nursing (8) and pharmaceuticals (6). There are also a few theses with respect to diet in the social sciences. For instance, 2 theses related to diet were written in the field of management while one thesis was written in the fields of statistics, advertising and fine arts each. On the other hand, a study related to diet could not be found in the field of tourism management.

It was then realized that theses might have been written on the problem of diet menu diversity within the scope of the health tourism and the previous key words were replaced by “health tourism”. As a result, 39 theses, out of which 8 were doctoral theses and 31 were graduate theses, were found. 27 of them were related to tourism, 11 of them were related to management of health institutions and 1 of them was related to the sports. None of the theses written on tourism was associated with the diet menus, and it was even determined that food and beverage services offered within the scope of health tourism were not examined from another perspective. Most of the studies were related to the current situation of the health tourism or health tourism opportunities in a specific district or region or types of health tourism. This is also valid for the articles related to the health tourism.

The search in the National Thesis Centre was repeated by using the word “menü” and 24 theses were found. While 22 of them were graduate theses, 2 of them were doctoral theses. When the fields where these theses were written were examined, it was seen that the highest number of theses on menus were written in the field of tourism (8). The field of tourism is followed by nutrition and dietetics (7), computer engineering (3), econometrics (2), public health (2) and management (2). The above-mentioned difference between the words “menü” and “mönü” caused confusion in this search as well since it was realized that the theses written in the field of computer engineering were actually about menus used for transmitters, phones and televisions, not menus of food and beverages. In order to prevent any confusion, the search was repeated with the word “mönü” and 7 more theses which could not be found in the previous search were reached. While one of these 7 theses was doctoral thesis, 6 of them were graduate theses. When the fields of these theses were examined, it was seen that they were written in the fields of tourism (2), nutrition and dietetics (2), management (1), food engineering (1) and computer engineering (1). Differently from the subjects of the previous theses written in the field of computer engineering, this thesis was associated with a menu of food and beverages.

The present study on the problem of diversity of diet menus prepared within the scope of health tourism and alternative solution recommendations is related to the field of tourism. Thus, it was thought that the subjects discussed in the theses found in the above-mentioned searches required a deeper examination and the Table 1 was prepared with the information obtained from Turkish Council of High Education.

**Table 1: Theses Written in the Field of Tourism by Using the Words Menü and Mönü**

Author	Thesis Title	Thesis Type	Year
Tamer BOLAT	Menu planning and pricing in food-beverage establishments	Graduate thesis	1995
Osman ÇETİNKAYA	Menu planning in food-beverage industry and improvement of food and beverages (An application in Varan Accommodation Facilities in Söğütözü)	Graduate thesis	1996
Işıl GÖKSU	Menu planning as a marketing tool in food-beverage industry	Graduate thesis	2000
Umut Tolga GÜMÜŞ	Cost control process in accommodation facilities and determination of room-menu costs: The case of a small-scale facility in Denizli	Graduate thesis	2005
Hüseyin ALTINEL	Menu management in gastronomy	Graduate thesis	2009
Nejdat EKİNCİ	Menu planning and menu pricing methods in hotels and the case of İstanbul Sürmeli Hotel	Graduate thesis	2010
Anıl AKAY	A research on attitudes of restaurateurs to menu planning and analysis	Graduate thesis	2012
Erol GEÇGİN	Use of target cost system in menu analysis: Application in a food-beverage facility and results	Graduate thesis	2013
Volkan BAHÇECİ	Approaches of restaurants to menu planning, pricing and analysis: a research in İzmir	Graduate thesis	2015
Vedat İYİTOĞLU	Using time factorial activity based costing and data envelopment analysis together in menu analysis: An application in a luxurious restaurant	Doctoral thesis	2016

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that all the thesis written in the field of tourism with the word ‘menu’ are related to menu analysis, menu planning, menu pricing etc. and there is no thesis on diet menus. Apart from those written in the field of tourism included in Table 1, there are three more theses on menu in the field of management. In this respect, while Çınar (2004) wrote a thesis on menu planning and pricing in the establishments having tourism operation licenses in İstanbul, Rızaoğlu (1990) addressed menu planning and developing as a management tool in commercial food-beverage establishments oriented to general markets. Taşpınar (2011) wrote a thesis examining the effects of menu engineering on food-beverage establishments within the scope of menu management in İstanbul. In other words, menu issue has been addressed from such aspects as planning, pricing and developing in the above-mentioned theses.

The literature review made with the aim of examining articles written on diet menus produced similar results as well. Thus, it is seen that the problem of diet menu diversity has not been studied and the existing studies are related to costs of menus, prices of food and menu planning through various computer-based programs. For instance, Günyavaşar and Oral (2005) conducted a study on versatile linear programming model developed for the planning of menus based on periods and meals for the military students serving in a unit of the Turkish Army. Likewise,

Körpeli et al. performed menu planning by using a target programming method in an application conducted in Kırklareli University in 2012. Koşan and Geçgin (2013) conducted a study to examine whether target costing system can be used in a food establishment together with menu analysis and determine the subsequent contributions to the establishment. On the other hand, Sezgin et al. (2008) carried out a study on creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship activities in menu planning of hotels and conducted research in 3-4-5 star hotels in and around Konya. In conclusion, the problem of diet menu diversity stands out as a topic which has not been examined yet.

### **Alternative Solutions to the Lack of Variety of Diet Menus**

The number one problem for dieting and health-conscious individuals is to find tasty and non-fattening food (Koçak, 2006: 64). To be a solution for this problem and for a plenty of suchlike problems menus offered to guests visiting hospitality establishments operating in the field of medical tourism vary depending on age, gender, weight and medical condition of guests and prepared exclusively for specific guests. When it is thought that a crowded team of cooks prepare food meticulously through division of labour in a hotel, the team is expected to work with the same meticulousness and division of labour for the diet menus in question as well. On the other hand, in general, the establishments operating in the health tourism sector should know very well the points to be considered in preparing diet menus and what to do for the diversification of diet menus. In this respect, the points to be considered are as follows:

- Diet menus should not drift guests away from a healthy and balanced diet. For this reason; carbohydrate, protein and fat content of the diet should be appropriate. It should be ensured that menus are adequate in terms of vitamins and minerals.
- Spices should be used more. For example, cinnamon is spice with a beautiful smell which meets individuals' craving for sweets.
- Plants such as linden, sage and tarragon should be utilized more and used in different food combinations. For example, it is possible to boil linden and use the water to cook semolina halva. This halva will have a different taste, aroma and smell and guest will be able to benefit linden's calming property.
- More chef regimier should be employed in hotels. As is known, a chef regimier is cook who prepares diet dishes in commercial kitchens especially in mountain and urban hotels or full pension establishments. The chef regimier must have extensive knowledge, skills and experience on this subject. In addition to the basic kitchen training, the chef regimier must have a special training on diet (Küçükaslan, 2006: 110; Gökdemir, 2005: 30).
- It is possible to prepare pastry with whole wheat flour instead of white flour. This way, it will be possible for guests to consume carbohydrates, the most difficult nutrient to give up, and fight against the weight problem at the same time. For example, it is possible to prepare lahmacun and pizza with whole wheat flour instead of white flour.
- The use of fructose syrup and artificial sweeteners should be avoided when preparing desserts. Only fruits, fruit puree or fruit juice should be used and refined sugar should

never be used due to its glycemic index and milk-based desserts should be preferred instead of sugar-based desserts. The milk used should be skimmed. It should be remembered that some losses will be inevitable in the taste of desserts prepared with skimmed milk. On the other hand, in situations where the artificial sweeteners have to be used it should be taken care not to cook the artificial sweeteners; the sweet should be added in the end after they are prepared. However, if it is absolutely necessary to apply baking operation, the burnable kinds of artificial sweeteners should be bought and used.

- If the guest visiting the establishment for medical tourism has no physical barriers, a cooking class where guests can cook their own diet dishes should be held and guest should be able to cook their own food. Thus, smells emerging during cooking will create a sense of fullness in individuals and guests will feel empowered for being in a social environment with other people experiencing similar problems.
- The use of salt should be limited in food prepared. However, if it is intended to use sun-dried tomato paste, which is also known as homemade tomato paste, no extra salt should be added along with this tomato paste with high salt content. Similarly, if it is intended to use a salty sauce such as soy sauce, no extra salt should be added.
- Unprocessed varieties of pickle prepared with traditional methods may be offered to guests in small amounts along with main dishes. Studies show that homemade pickles have various health benefits. Also, since a wide variety of food are pickled in our country (beans, turnips, carrots, cabbage, cucumber, cabbage, melon, pepper, etc.), establishments should not have any trouble finding different pickle varieties to offer their long-staying guests. However, if dishes are combined with pickle varieties, the salt content should certainly be under control.
- Dried fruits and nuts should be used in both preparation and presentation of food. Dried fruits and nuts are both delicious and contain several substances which help individuals to lose weight. However, it should be ensured that nuts are not roasted.
- The use of certain ingredients from around the world will ensure that guests have a different experience and lead to the idea that they are in touch with the social world. In this context, the use of tofu from the Far East cuisine is recommended since it has a high protein content. As is known tofu is a white, soft, easy-to-digest, high-protein, low-calorie, cholesterol-free soybean curd (Kunt, 2004:490). Tofu is a product which can be used in many different foods from soups to desserts and fries with its simple and neutral taste.
- Vegetable margarines and processed oils should never be used in specially prepared diet menus. Instead, riviera-type olive oils should be used for olive oil dishes and cold-pressed extra virgin olive oil should be used for salads. If the dish is meat-based, meat's natural fat should be used. Natural butter should be used in food other than these. However, it should be remembered that 1 gr of oil has 9 kilocalories of energy and the amount of oil should be limited. 1 tablespoon of olive oil should be sufficient for 1 kilogram of vegetable dish and 1 teaspoon of olive oil should be sufficient for a large bowl of salad.

- Losses occur in terms of vitamins when processes such as peeling, slicing, filtering, grating and rubbing with salt are done on some fruits and vegetables. For this reason, in such fruits and vegetables, the slicing should be done with hands instead of knives as much as possible and the rinds of fruits and vegetables should not be peeled too deeply. Similarly, since the vitamins of a lot of nutriment pass to the cooking water very quickly it should be taken care not to spill the cooking water of the nutriment. Furthermore it should not be forgotten that the nutritional values of some nutrient mediums disappear when they contact with light or oxygen.
- Vegetables should never be deep fried. In fact, this cooking method should never be used to prepare dishes. As is known, there is a wide range of cooking methods (sauté, boiling, grill, roti, braising, poise) used in the kitchens. The meals should be prepared using the method which best fits the diet menus of the individuals but it should be taken care not to use the same cooking method all the time.
- Guests should be served salads everyday along with lunch and dinner. Two methods may be followed at this point. The first is to offer a salad bar with a wide variety of salad ingredients and allow guests to create their own salads with their preferred ingredients. The second is the preparation of salad lists to be served with each course by chefs of the establishment.
- Freshly squeezed lemon juice should be used in sauces served with salads. Industrially produced lemon juices/sauces should never be used. Similarly, pomegranate syrups sold under the name of pomegranate sour should never be used. Natural pomegranate sour should be used instead. Special salad sauces prepared by mixing various ingredients should be revised to lower the calorie content and add diet menus.
- Instead of classic salads prepared in the same style all the time, salads containing ingredients such as cracked wheat, buckwheat, mung bean, kidney bean, lentil and rice brown may be used in salads alternatively.
- The soups are considerably helpful food groups in solving the problem of diet menu diversity. It is known that there are quite a lot of different kinds of hot and cold soups both in the Turkish cuisine and in the world cuisine. However, while preparing soups it is necessary to avoid using cream-soups.
- Turkish coffee or drip coffee should be served to guests visiting the establishment for medical tourism instead of instant coffee. Compared to instant coffee, Turkish coffee and drip coffee are more suitable for dieting.
- Even if the original recipe demands that the dish is cooked with alcohol, diet dishes should not contain alcohol. In such cases, either the dish should not be cooked or should be cooked without alcohol. Similarly, alcohol should not be served alongside dishes. It should be remembered that 1 gr of alcohol has 7 kilocalories.
- It should be noted that guests visiting the establishment for medical tourism will need refreshments and snacks in addition to main courses. In this context, it is possible to prepare a wide variety of snacks with dried fruits, fruit puree, oat, oat bran and cereals.

For example, sweet snacks may be prepared with grated apple, cinnamon, cocoa and oat, whereas salty snack may be prepared with oat bran, dill and cheese. Also, vegetables such as vichy carrot and potato may be oven-dried, seasoned with spices and served to guests as chips. Vichy is a chopping style in round and knife edge thick circles ([www.megep.meb.gov.tr](http://www.megep.meb.gov.tr)).

- Hospitality establishments operating in the field of medical tourism may offer herbal teas brewed from fruits and aromatic herbs in their bars. Some of these herbal teas may also be offered as cold drinks in ornamental glasses. Thus, guest can consume drinks suitable for their diets and also get away from diet psychology since they will get these drinks from the bar. Similarly, detox drinks easily prepared by experts using juicers and blenders in said bars will be suitable for diet menus of guests. However, if such a service will be offered, the bar personnel should definitely receive appropriate training.
- Broad beans are known to be a good source of fiber and protein. In this context, boiled chickpeas and haricot beans may alternatively be prepared as dips by adding pepper paste and spices instead of cooking as a dish or lentil may alternatively be prepared as petties for increased variety. Dips in question may be served along with wheat bread or wheat crackers. If bread is to be served alongside dips, they may alternatively be prepared with tomato or olive and given shape using cookie cutters. Thus, food in question will be served to guests with an elegant presentation.
- When preparing diet menus, it should be remembered that some guests may have food allergies. For example, it should be considered that some individuals may be allergic to pistachio, strawberry, chocolate or honey. In order to avoid such problems, the establishment operating in the field of medical tourism have their guests fill a form when checking in and find out about their food-related sensitivities. A similar case will be experienced with celiac patients. As is known, the celiac is a disease which develops in genetically-susceptible persons when such grains as wheat, barley, rye which contain gluten are consumed due to oversensitiveness to gluten they contain and results in such situations as abdominal swelling, inability to digest fatty foods and diarrhoea (Akkaya, 2014:1; [www.tdk.gov.tr](http://www.tdk.gov.tr)). If there are celiac patients among guests, the establishment must pay utmost attention to use gluten-free flour.
- In order to add variety to diet menus, high-protein seafood may be used. Using seafood such as shrimp, calamari, mussel, etc. with different variations will provide an alternative to lack of variety in diet menus.
- Recipes containing mayonnaise should absolutely be avoided. No matter if the mayonnaise in question is factory-produced or homemade; it contains too much fat and should not be used in diet menus.
- Some of guest visiting the hospitality establishment may be vegetarians. It is possible to define vegetarianism as avoiding meat, fish, poultry and in some cases egg, milk and milk products for various reasons. Vegetarianism is based on religious, moral, and nutrition-related reasons (Altinel, 2011:126).

As is known, vegetarians fall into different categories (Güneş, 2009: 65-66):

- a) **Vegans:** They make up a small portion of vegetarians. They are the most problematic group in terms of balanced diet since they avoid all animal products.
- b) **Lacto Vegetarians:** The group which consume only milk and milk derivatives among animal products. Iron deficiency may be observed if the diet is not supplemented with iron.
- c) **Ovo Vegetarians:** They do not consume meat and milk. Ovo vegetarians consume plant-based food and eggs.
- d) **Lacto-Ovo Vegetarians:** They consume milk, milk derivatives and also eggs. They do not consume meat.

Also, it should be remembered that there are other varieties of vegetarianism as well such as pescetarianism (those who avoid meat and poultry, but consume milk, milk products, eggs and fish) and semi-vegetarianism (those who avoid red meat, but consume milk, milk products, eggs, poultry and fish) ([www.gidacilar.net](http://www.gidacilar.net)). In such cases, the establishment should find out the variety of vegetarianism adopted by the guest and prepare menus according to the guest's life style.

- Fruits and dried fruits may be prepared as alternatives such as syrup, juice, jam, fruit stew, marmalade and compote using their own sugar and without any additional sugar and added to diet menus.
- Meat, fish or chicken should be marinated before grilling and aromatic plants such as rosemary, fennel, dill, garlic and black peppercorn should be used in marination. This way, grilled food will be much more delicious.
- Attention must be paid when buying ingredients to use in diet menus. Unbranded products should not be preferred just because they are cheap. Certificates and documents of products should be checked. Moreover, the purchasing personnel should be allowed to visit production or growing facilities on a regular basis. Unpackaged and openly sold products should not be bought, attention should be paid to the expiration dates of the nutrients and the ingredients should definitely be read. On the other hand, although the purchasing is done exactly right and in the way as wanted, if the business does not show the necessary sensitivity to storage then the diet meals that would emerge would be of poor quality. In this respect the business has to completely obey the storage rules.
- Since it will not be enough for a hospitality establishment operating in the field of medical tourism to employ a chef who can cook diet dishes, it should be remembered that at least one food engineer and one dietitian should be employed by the establishment.
- Dental problem will be experienced in relation to diet menus if guests are 65 years old or older. Easy-to-chew and easy-to-swallow menus should be prepared for such guests.

- Survey should be applied to guests who spend long periods of time in the establishment to find out whether they are satisfied with menus and additional studies should be performed to include certain foods to menus in accordance with requests of guests.
- Seasonal conditions should be considered when preparing diet menus. This will make the access to ingredients easier, reduce costs and also ensure ingredients are fresh and tasty. Similarly, fishing bans should be considered in relation to menus containing fish varieties.
- It should be remembered that the color composition of dishes should satisfy guests. For example, guests will be unhappy if all the food on the plate or buffet is green or red. Instead, a composition should be created with colors such as red, yellow, white, orange, green, etc.
- Plain ice cream may be used when having trouble to find a different dessert.
- As is the same in all products, utmost attention should be paid to hygiene principals also in the production and service stages of the diet menus.
- The food handlers should never neglect to take a witness sample from each diet meal that is produced as a precaution for a possible food poisoning and similar cases.
- Standard prescriptions should definitely be prepared so that certain standards can be set for the prepared diet menus and so that these diet menus can always be in the same quality. As is known, standard prescription is the name given to the standardization of prescriptions (recipes) that are standardized with experimental studies ([www.megep.meb.gov.tr](http://www.megep.meb.gov.tr)).
- To overcome the problem of diet menu diversity and to succeed in preparing good looking, filling, low-calorie and delicious food and drinks for the guests will be a quite important opportunity for the advertisement of the accommodation facility, and it will provide a competitive advantage over their opponents. Since this will attract tourists both in national and in international sense it will also reflect affirmatively on the occupancy rate of the accommodation facility that provides services as part of health tourism.
- The chief cook and the chief regimier of the accommodation facility that operates as part of health tourism should follow the medical advances and inventions closely, should read books and articles related to his/her field, and should attend to trainings at odd times. In this way both the chiefs will improve themselves and the quality of service provided for the guests will increase.
- It is quite normal for guests traveling due to various health problems and staying in a hospitality establishment operating in the field of medical tourism to consume diet menus and support this diet by engaging in sport activities and using extra services such as sauna and steam room. However, if individuals fail to maintain the same life style after leaving the hospitality establishment which they visited within the scope of

medical tourism, their health will be negatively affected. Hence, individuals must change their life styles and nutritions radically in order to maintain their health.

- Not only hospitality establishments operating in the field of medical tourism, but also all food and beverage establishments should include diet dishes in their menus, even if in a limited number. In fact, it should be mandatory to offer such dishes. Also, information such as total caloric content, cooking method and ingredients should be specified next to or under the name of the dish in menu cards. This way, individuals will be able to maintain their health and have the chance to eat-out and socialize while dieting.

### Conclusion

What comes to mind when people think of diet is usually white cheese about the size of a matchbox, undressed salads, tasteless snacks and boiled vegetables. For this reason, people are unwilling to diet even when their health is on the line and show psychological resistance. It is obvious that some diet menus are quite monotonous. However, since hospitality establishments operating in the field of medical tourism employ trained and experienced personnel, it is almost impossible to see white cheese about the size of a matchbox, undressed salads, tasteless snacks and boiled vegetables in diet menus. Cooks can create very delicious and low-calorie menus which do not repeat themselves when they combine their training with their imagination. . However, there are rules that should definitely be obeyed while preparing these menus. Both the tourists who travel within the scope of health tourism and the accommodation facilities that provide services as part of health tourism will succeed as long as the given rules are obeyed.

### Recommendations

Other researchers can turn this study based on the literature into an applied research covering guests who travel within the scope of health tourism and stay in the accommodation establishments operating in the health tourism sector. Also, the graduate students in the field of Tourism Management can be encouraged to obtain knowledge on this issue and to write theses.

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