

SOME FACTORS INFLUENCING BMI AT AGE 6-8 YEARS

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Abstract

The economic growth and development of our country has led to an increase of the BMI of population in general and especially of the children. Obesity is becoming a concerning problem for all of us and for the children in particular because it may become chronic and in the future can turn to a basis for cardiovascular diseases or diabetes etc. This is the reason why we undertook this study on the age group 6-8 years, to evaluate the BMI of these children and their nutrition habits. Evaluation of body mass indicators (BMI) in children aged 6-8 years, according to gender, location of the school (rural or urban), school types (public or private), household income per capita etc. The study was developed from September 2013 until December 2013. Our study included 246 children between the ages of 6 and 8 years old, of whom 110 were males and 136 were females. All children underwent to anthropometric measurements for weight and length parameters. Pupils also completed a questionnaire regarding parental education, family's economic level, the way food is consumed and the type, time and quantity of food. The questionnaire also had questions about preferences for food products such as: high sugar continent drinks, fruits, fatty products, meat, salt etc. Also there were questions about their sport activities, the impact of physical appearance on their mood etc. The data processing was performed with SPSS version 20.0. Rates are taken from BMI standards defined by the WHO: 1. Children with BMI below 20 kg/m² are considered underweight. 2. Children with BMI between 20-25 kg / m² are considered normal. 3. Children with BMI over 25 kg / m² are considered overweight. 4. Children with BMI over 30 kg / m² are considered obese. 5. Children with BMI up to 40 kg/m² are considered patients at risk. From the survey turned out that in 246 children from 6 to 8years (110 males and 136 females), 10 % were underweight, 57 % were normal, 31% were overweight and 2 % were obese. Based on the BMI classification overweight was more common for females than males, 16.3% for females and 14.7 % for males, while obesity was 1.2 % for females and 0.8 % for males. But the comparison of overweight and obesity with gender has not shown gender as a significant factor ($p>0.05$), so gender does not affect overweight or obesity. In the group of children with normal weight 25.8% were females and 31.2% were males, while in the underweight category 5.7% were females and 4.3% were males. It is noticed that overweight children come from families with a normal number of persons compared to underweight children who come from families with a small number of persons. Overweight children have a lower salt intake in their food products, compared to underweight children ($p>0.05$). Despite the low spread of overweight and obesity at the studied age groups, it is necessary to set up a strategy for proactive intervention, related with increased sport activities, a fiber-rich nutrition with vegetables, fruits and less carbohydrates fats.

Keywords: *free fat mass, sport activities, fiber –rich nutrition*