

Is snack consumption associated with meal skipping in children and adolescents? The CASPIAN-IV study.

[Kelishadi R¹](#), [Mozafarian N¹](#), [Qorbani M^{2,3}](#), [Motlagh ME⁴](#), [Safiri S⁵](#), [Ardalan G¹](#), [Keikhah M¹](#), [Rezaei F⁶](#), [Heshmat R⁷](#).

Abstract

PURPOSE:

The present inquiry set to assess the relationship between snack consumption and meal skipping in Iranian children and adolescents.

METHODS:

Overall, 14,880 students, aged 6-18 years, were selected via multistage cluster sampling method from rural and urban areas of 30 provinces of Iran. A validated questionnaire of food behaviors including questions on snacks consumption and taking/skipping meals was completed. Consuming and skipping meals and their related factors were reported in both crude and adjusted models.

RESULTS:

Overall, 13,486 students with a mean age of 12.47 ± 3.36 years completed the study (90.6% participation rate). Among them, 32.08, 8.89, and 10.90% skipped breakfast, lunch, and dinner, respectively. Compared to their counterpart groups, the frequency of meal skipping was higher in girls, urban inhabitants, and students in higher school grades ($P < 0.05$). Snack consumption was associated with an increased odds ratio of meal skipping in many types of snack groups.

CONCLUSIONS:

Meal skipping and snack consumption were frequent among Iranian children and adolescents. Evidence based interventions are proposed to improve the students' eating habits.

KEYWORDS:

Adolescents; Children; Meal skipping; Snack consumption