

Obesity and overweight among primary school children in Iran.

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Author information

Abstract

AIM:

The aim of this paper was to describe the prevalence of overweight (preobesity and obesity) among 7- to 13-year-old children in different parts of Jahrom City, Southern Iran, during 2008-2009.

METHODS:

A total of 1158 students (587 males and 571 females) aged 7-13 years were assessed over a period of 12 months. Schools were randomly selected in each district of the city, and the participating children were selected using stratified randomization for age, with the aid of a table of random numbers. Body Mass Index (BMI) was measured for each subject. We adopted the 5th, 85th and 95th percentiles of the CDC as cut-off points for thin, overweight and obese children, respectively, as generally accepted.

RESULTS:

Age of the children ranged from 7 to 13 years with a mean of 9.9 ± 1.6 years. A total of 58 boys (9.9%) and 57 girls (10%) were overweight, and the difference between them was not statistically significant. However, obesity was less prevalent among girls (4.9%) compared to boys (5.1%).

CONCLUSION:

In this survey, prevalence of obesity among girls and boys was 4.9% and 5.1%, respectively. The scope of prevalence of obesity is remarkable enough for a mid-size semi-industrialized society in comparison with heavy industrialized parts of Iran, thus there is an urgent need to target younger ages for prevention and implementation of public educational programs to curtail this rising trend of obesity in young men and women.