

# **PREVALENCE OF OVERWEIGHT AND OBESITY AMONG SCHOOL GOING ADOLESCENT FEMALES OF 10-17 YEARS OF AGE IN THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, KERALA, INDIA**

Submitted by:

Anjali.V.R.  
Anjana Asokan  
Rakhe Jayamohanam  
Anish T.Eapen

Guide:

## **Dr.Sudharmini.S**

Assistant Professor of Entomology  
Dept. of Community Medicine  
Govt. Medical College, Thiruvananthapuram

## **Abstract**

For the first time in human history, the number of overweight rivals the number of underweight, according to a report from the World's Watch Institute, of a Washington D.C. based research organization. This prompted us to take up this study among adolescent girls to assess the burden of obesity among them.

Childhood obesity is a modern epidemic. It is mainly a lifestyle disease which is modifiable and preventable. The age group of 10-17 years is more prone to obesity and is easy to intervene with. In this age group, growth, growth sprout begins and children become more beauty conscious. For these reasons, this is the most modifiable group. Hence, the present study was envisaged to find out the prevalence of overweight and obesity among school going adolescent girls of 10-17 years of age of Govt. Higher Secondary School for Girls, Cotton Hill, in Thiruvananthapuram district of Kerala, India, and to study its relation to different variables like age, dietary habits, habit of eating in between meals, mode of transport, physical activity and nature of hobbies.

A cross – sectional descriptive study was done among 530 students selected from 5<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> standards of Govt. Higher Secondary School for Girls, Cotton Hill, Thiruvananthapuram, to find the prevalence of overweight and obesity using Body Mass

Index (BMI) and its relation to dietary habits and nature of physical activity. The weight and height of the students were measured using weighing machine, measuring tape and scale and the BMI was calculated. A pre-tested questionnaire was used to assess their dietary habits and physical activity.

The CDC BMI-for-age chart for girls of 2-20 years of age was used to classify the students into underweight, normal, overweight and obese.

The data obtained were analysed using Microsoft Excel and Epi Info 2000. The analysed data were tabulated to depict the prevalence of overweight and obesity among school going adolescent girls and its association with the different study variables like age, dietary habits, habit of eating in between meals, mode of transport, physical activity and nature of hobbies.

On interpretation using  $\chi^2$  test of significance, the different study variables were found to have a significant association with BMI.

The present study revealed that 5.10% of the subjects were obese and 14.90% of the students were overweight. There is an increasing trend of obesity with increasing age, over-eating, sedentary lifestyle and hobbies not involving much of physical work, like TV viewing.

The study urges to combat obesity through low calorie diet, increased physical activity and creating awareness among parents and students, as the obese are prone to different systemic complications in their near future.