

PREVALENCE OF OBESITY IN CHILDREN OF THE AGES 5 TO 15 YEARS DUE TO REDUCED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY 2003

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Abstract

We conducted a descriptive study to find out the prevalence of obesity in children aged 5 to 15 years due to reduced physical activity. Our aim was to study the prevalence of obesity in this age group and to determine whether reduced physical activity had any relationship with this.

We carried out our study in two phases. The first phase was carried out with a pre test population of 96 students at the Vacation Bible School of the St.Thomas Syrian Orthodox Church, Kumarapuram, Thiruvananthapuram. Our methodology was to distribute a questionnaire among the 96 students. Then their heights and weights were measured from which their BMIs were calculated. Finally they were given a class on the hazards and complications of obesity, its causes and on how to prevent it.

The second phase was carried out with 636 students at the Jawahar Bal Bhavan, Thiruvananthapuram, which was our test population. Our methodology was to distribute a pretested questionnaire among the 636 students. Then their heights and weights were measured from which their BMIs were calculated. Again, they were given a class on the hazards and complications of obesity, its causes and on how to prevent it.

Our study was spread over a period from April to June, 2006. Data regarding the height, weight, amount of physical activity, sex distribution and ages of the students in both the populations were collected. The percentage of overweight students in both populations was calculated.

Through statistical methods it was found that there is a relation between increased values of BMI and decreased physical activity in both populations.