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09^{and} 10, MAY 2014

CHALLENGES & INNOVATION
IN HEALTH

Abstracts

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LUNCH EATING HABITS IN PORTUGUESE COLLEGE STUDENTS CONSIDERING THE LOCATION OF MEAL

Andreia Azevedo^{1,a}, Filipa Fernandes^{1,b}, Lara Fernandes^{1,c}, Patrícia Fernandes^{1,d}, António Fernandes^{1,e}, Vera Ferro-Lebres^{1,f}

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Introduction: A healthy diet is associated with indicators of proximity to family, colleagues and school, and a perception of personal and social well-being.

Objective: To understand the eating habits of undergraduate higher education students, considering the location of meal.

Methods: A cross-sectional, quantitative study was developed using a probabilistic sample of 405 students from a Portuguese public higher education institution. Data collection involved the use of a questionnaire that included questions about the meal location, the type of meal, food/ingredients and their portion sizes. To verify if the consumption of different food groups, at lunch varies given the location where the meal was consumed, it was used the Kruskal-Wallis test.

Results: At lunch, significant differences were found in what concerns the consumption, being higher in cereals, cereal products and tubers, at “home”, “school canteen” and “restaurant”; milk and derivatives in “other places”; oils and fats in the “restaurant”; candy in “restaurant”; fats in the “school canteen”, “restaurant” and “other places”; and, juices in “other places”.

Conclusions: These results suggest that higher education students eating habits vary according to the location of meal, only in some food groups. Regarding the consumption of fruits, vegetables, meat, fish and eggs, legumes, alcohol and salty there were no statistically significant differences, which suggests that the consumption of these foods is independent from the meal location.

Descriptors: Eating habits; Higher education; Students; Lunch; Location of Meal.

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EATING ATTITUDES AND RISK OF EATING DISORDERS IN ADOLESCENTS: ROLE OF THE THINNESS STEREOTYPE

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Introduction: In societies where thinness is seen as a sign of ideal beauty, there is a significant social pressure for teenagers to follow this model. Such cultural stereotypes can create risky situations in what eating behaviors are concerned. Those risky situations are associated with attitudes connected with fear of gaining weight and with low self-esteem.

Objective: To identify risky eating attitudes in adolescents and to characterize associations between eating attitudes (promoting risk of developing an eating disorder), sex and age.

Methods: 358 adolescents (convenience sample) of two secondary schools (aged 14-18 years) were asked to complete the EAT-25 (eating attitudes test) (range from 0 to 75; cutoff=19).

Results: We found 4, 5% of increased-risk cases (boys: scores between 20 and 25; girls: scores between 19 and 35). No statistically significant differences were found between overall score of EAT-25 and age. Girls have higher ($p < .001$) scores (mean=7.04; SD=4.48) than boys (mean=4.78; SD=7.15), and higher prevalence of increased-risk cases. This difference between sexes results mainly from factor “Drive for thinness” ($p < .001$).

Conclusions: A relevant percentage of adolescents revealed attitudes that put them in a spectrum of increased risk for eating disorders (more prevalent in girls). Desire to be thin is the most relevant attitudinal dimension. Health education interventions oriented to set objective and healthy standards of body image and to promote overall self-esteem building among adolescents are strategic to avoid the eventual development of eating disorders.

Descriptors: Eating attitudes; Eating disorders; Adolescents.

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