

Lifestyle Behaviors among Jordanian Obese Children Aged 6-9 Years: A Cross-Sectional Study

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Abstract : Background: Obesity in children is increasing in developed and developing countries, which leads to morbidity and premature mortality. Lifestyle behaviors are an important issue in minimizing this problem and subsequent complications. Thus, this study purposed to assess lifestyle behaviors, including dietary habits and physical activity, among Jordanian obese children aged 6-9 years. Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted on 324 children aged 6-9 years using a questionnaire consisting of items measuring dietary habits (7 items) and physical activity (8 items). Results: Findings showed that obese children had bad dietary habits involved in the number of meals eaten day ($M= 5.06$, $SD=1.14$), number of snacks of sweet/chocolates daily ($M= 3.61$, $SD=0.82$), and number of glasses of sweet fizzy drinks/day ($M= 3.39$, $SD=0.96$). Moreover, they had poor physical activity represented in the number of playing or training in an activity like dancing, swimming, and walking in the past week ($M= 0.06$, $SD=1.01$), number of days in participating in moderate physical activity last week ($M= 0.06$, $SD=1.01$), time spending in using a computer, watching TV, watching videos or using the internet as a part of study or homework in the last week ($M= 16.88$, $SD=2.37$), and), time spending in using a computer, watching TV, watching videos or using the internet for fun or recreation in the past week ($M= 14.44$, $SD=2.37$). Conclusion: Obese children aged 6-9 had unhealthy lifestyle behaviors, which could expose them to a high risk of increasing comorbidities associated with obesity. Therefore, this preliminary study helps develop an intervention program based on modifying unhealthy behaviors, including bad dietary habits and a sedentary lifestyle. The results provide baseline data about the strategies for developing intervention programs for weight reduction.

Keywords : obesity, children, behaviors, lifestyle

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