

Dietary patterns, overweight and obesity rates in children aged 9-12 in primary schools of Greek island Lemnos

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Children obesity consists a fundamental problem of public health in Greece. The understanding of the factors which is correlated to is a requirement for the implementation of intervening policy and treatment. The aim of the study was to investigate the dietary habits of the students in Lemnos Island and their correlation to obesity and overweight rates.

Materials and methods: 130 students of the 4th, 5th and the 6th grade from three primary schools of Lemnos Island completed a food frequency questionnaire (FFQ). A weigh measurement followed BMI calculation with the use of growth charts in order to estimate the rates of obese, overweight and underweight children. Correlations were carried out between children dietary patterns and their BMI.

Results: The majority of the children follow a balanced diet according to the nutritional reco-

mmendations. The obesity prevalence and the overweight rates of the Lemnos students was 8.2% and 16.4%, respectively. 72.4% of the students had normal weight, whereas 3% of them were underweight. There was no correlation of obesity/overweight rates with the dietary patterns and physical activity. Boys consume breakfast more frequently in comparison to girls and are more occupied with athletic activities. In the 4th grade the breakfast consumption was more frequent in comparison to the 6th grade.

Conclusions: The students of Lemnos appear low rates of overweight, in comparison with other studies in Greek land, by following a balanced diet. The environment and the living conditions of the children on the island may contribute to adapting a healthier way of living.

Key words: Children, obesity, nutritional habits