

World Congress on **Public Health and Nutrition**

March 10-12, 2016 Madrid, Spain

Prevalence of overweight and obesity and their correlates- A cross sectional study among medical students of India

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The present cross-sectional study was carried out from January, 2014 to December, 2014 with the following objectives: 1) to find out the prevalence of overweight and obesity in medical students and 2) to determine the correlates of overweight and obesity. Participants were medical students posted in the Department of Community Medicine during 3rd to 5th semesters under Rural Health Posting. Total number of participants was 240 comprising of 150 male and 90 female students. A pretested questionnaire was given to them and complete personal details, dietary habits were noted down followed by examination. Body Mass Index (BMI) was used to categorize the students into underweight, normal, overweight and obese groups. A BMI of <18.5 Kg/ m² was taken as cut off point for under weight. Overweight and Obese were taken at the level of 23 Kg/ m² and 25 Kg/m² and above respectively. Among 150 male students, 30 (20.0%) were overweight while 9 (6.0%) were found to be obese and 6 (4.0%) were underweight. Among 90 girls, 21(23.3%) were overweight, 10(11.1%) obese and (7.7%) were found to be underweight. High calorie intake was noticed in 45 (30.0%) male students and lack of physical activity was observed in 25(16.7%) male students. Among female students, high calorie intake and lack of physical activity was found in 31(34.4%) and 20 (22.2%) students respectively. There is urgent need for prevention of obesity and its risk factors among college students. These findings have enormous significance for developing societies emerging from poverty and continuing to bear the double burden of both form of malnutrition in their populations.

Biography

M Athar Ansari is teaching under-graduate and post-graduate medical students and also involved in training of medical interns in rural health programs. He is also involved in the research activities directed towards micronutrient deficiencies, HIV/AIDS, disaster management and environmental health issues. He has got 70 papers published in the reputed journals. He has authored eight books on public health issues. He is also working in the field of nuclear disarmament in the country under the banner of Indian Institute of Peace, Disarmament and Environmental Protection (IIPDEP), Nagpur, India and International Physicians for Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), a Nobel Peace Prize Winner organization. He has been Coordinator/Principal Investigator/ Co-investigator/Supervisor of various prestigious projects of different agencies like UNICEF, Bill Clinton Foundation, Kids with Vision, New York, World Learning of USA, Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd. (NPCIL), Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), New Delhi and Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of India. He is a Co-patron of Medics, an umbrella organization of medical doctors and university students working for the poorest of the poor sections of the society in Aligarh and across India.

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