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Weight loss methods in school children with overweight and obese

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Childhood is an important opportunity to develop healthy patterns for life and prevent weight problems. Children who are overweight or obese can benefit from healthy eating and regular physical activities (exercise). Children may use different methods for weight loss like adults. This study was aimed to determine methods for weight loss in children with overweight and obese. School children aged 6-16 years were included in this study. Height and weight measurements of 1695 children were evaluated and body mass index values were calculated. After that questionnaire forms were given for evaluating weight loss methods. Of all children, 99 (5.8%) were overweight, 72 (4.2%) were obese and 198 (11.7%) were underweight (BMI <5 percentile). The ratios of any methods used for weight loss were 2.6%, 4.1% and 10.0% in normal, overweight and obese groups, respectively. This result was statistically significant ($p < 0.01$). While 7.0% of overweight children, 15.0% of obese children practiced diet, exercise and alternative methods for weight loss, 2.9% of children with normal weight interestingly reported diet, exercise and alternative methods. The most common alternative methods was herbal tea (green tea, fennel tea, chamomilla, sage tea ve mix herbal tea). Normal, overweight and obese school children drunk herbal tea as 1.4%, 4.0% and 6.9%, respectively. Other methods were eating parsley, peppermint and drinking vinegar in the morning during a fast. Alternative methods were significantly frequent in obese children ($p < 0.001$) and in older age group (11-16 age) ($p < 0.01$). As a result the most common method was herbal teas among school children. Although effects on weight loss and adverse reactions of these methods is not described well, alternative weight loss methods are very common among overweight and obese school children even among normals. Education related to professional advice from a doctor or dietitian can help reach and maintain a healthy weight.

Biography

Zerrin Orbak, MD, is a graduate of Ataturk University School of Medicine, where she completed her residency in Pediatrics before going to Ege University as a Post-doctoral fellow in Pediatric Endocrinology. She has published more than 100 original articles, chapters and reviews.

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