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From mouth to mind: The emotional toll of an obese child

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Childhood overweight and obesity have dramatically increased throughout the world over last three decades largely due to increased food craving and lack of physical activity. Apart from the known physical comorbidities obesity has significant psychological impact on growing children and adolescents thus it receives great interest in psychological research. Obesity imposes the risk of stronger psychological strain to both the child and the parents as obesity is a highly visible disorder. These experienced problems fulfill the diagnostic criteria of psychiatric disorders in about 10-20% of the children and adolescents. Obese child and parents are thought to be responsible for the weight of the child. The child who looks different among his peers is at increased risk of discrimination hence obese children are neglected while severely obese children are rejected by their peers. Obese children are facing social discrimination including teasing experiences, emotional problems such as depression or low self-esteem, school and functional restrictions and adverse effects on overall quality of life. There are consistent discriminations for obese people for education, employment and healthcare facility which are considered as three important area of life. Unraveling the relationship of the childhood obesity to psychological illness is important to recognize the impact of the disease for the development of effective primary, secondary and tertiary prevention strategies. From this work it is concluded that obese children have increased number of worse reported outcome in emotional and psychological health. Parents, teachers and clinicians should be made aware on the specific psychological impact of childhood obesity to target the effective interventions. Future studies should focus on the psychological impact of the childhood obesity to design the multifactorial interventional programs to overcome this health care burden.

Biography

Vishnukumar S is a dedicated Researcher with a strong background in health science especially in Pediatrics. He has expertise in evaluation and passion in improving the health and wellbeing. After obtaining his MBBS degree at Eastern University in 2012, he has obtained Postgraduate Diploma in Child Health in Sri Lanka. Currently he is following his MD in Pediatrics at Postgraduate Institute of Medicine, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka. He holds an appointment of Lecturer of Pediatrics at the Faculty of Healthcare Sciences, Eastern University, Sri Lanka. He is also a Member of the Sri Lanka Medical Council (SLMC), Sri Lanka Medical Association (SLMA), Young Scientist Forum (YSF), Perinatal Society of Sri Lanka (PSSL) and Nutritional Society of Sri Lanka (NSSL) where he contributes to the functional platform.

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