



Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and eating patterns

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Abstract:

Several studies have suggested that unhealthy dietary patterns of individuals with ADHD, may directly lead to their excess weight gain and obesity. Respectively, it was found that both children and adults with ADHD consumed less healthy foods and more unhealthy foods. We examined whether university students with ADHD are characterized by unhealthy eating patterns and what underlies this connection. We found that: (1) students with ADHD reported similar daily consumption of calories, however, consumed less healthy foods; (2) At the university cafeteria students with ADHD chose to buy less healthy food items than students without ADHD (73% versus 25%); (3) What underlies these choices was not differences in the perceptions of food or the reported desire to eat; (4) In the last study in which we advertised specific sandwiches in the cafeteria, we found that only students with ADHD were affected by this manipulation. In conclusion, this study found that students with ADHD consumed less healthy food. They did not perceive the benefit and risk of food differently, but they behaved differently when they were exposed to food that was more attractive and convenient (the advertised sandwiches). The results of this study are of importance for the construction of an environmental intervention program for specific sandwiches in the cafeteria, we found that only students with ADHD were affected by this manipulation. In conclusion, this study found that students with ADHD consumed less healthy food. They did not perceive the benefit and risk of food differently, but they behaved differently when they were exposed to food that was more attractive and convenient (the advertised sand-



wiches). The results of this study are of importance for the construction of an environmental intervention program for individuals with ADHD (promoting healthy, attractive and more convenient foods in their living environment).

Biography:

Shirley Hershko has completed her PhD at The Hebrew University (Israel). She is a postdoctoral student at Southampton University (UK), and also a psychotherapist student at Haifa university (Israel). In addition, she is the Director of diagnostic and support center for adults with ADHD. These days she is writing a book ("How to organize my life with ADHD") and developing an app for adults with ADHD.

Recent Publications:

1. Hershko S, et al JMIR Res Protoc 2020.
2. Hershko S, et al Appetite 2020.
3. Hershko S, et al Ophthalmic Physiol Opt 2019.
4. Hershko S, et al Comput Biol Med 2019

Webinar on Pharmacology | July 17, 2020 | Paris, France

Citation: Hershko S; Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and eating patterns; Pharmacology 2020; July 17, 2020; Paris, France