

Weight reduction in children, why it always fails?

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Abstract

Failure in weight reduction programs is frequent in obese children. Although it seems easy to eat better and exercise more, weight reduction is a difficult task. To clarify the principal causes of this failure we include 200 families with one or more obese children. 235 children, 122 boys and 113 girls with body mass index > percentile 95 were included. Age was 11 ± 0.9 years. Genetic and hormonal causes were excluded. All the families were instructed about nutritional and exercise recommendations. Children were evaluated every 2 months for 6 months. Questionnaire about the adherence to the recommendation were realized on each visit. The first 2 month 80 boys (65 %) and 90 girls (79 %) loosed weight. The second 2 month this number were reduced to 60 boys (49 %) and 72 girls (63 %). The third 2 months 45 boys (36 %) and 60 girls (53 %) loosed weight. All the rest augmented their weight. Always more girls loosed weight than boys ($p < 0.05$). Analyzing the data of the questionnaire; father's lack of time was the main reason to abandon physical exercise (55 %). the second cause was no cooperation of the grandparents offering unhealthy food, as they see the children healthy and not obese (32%). Other causes (18 %) were children's refusal to eat the offered healthy food or to make physical exercise, fractures or sickness during the observation period. Conclusions: failure to lose weight or incidence in obesity in the majority of cases is responsibility of parents and grandparents. Education programs should address them about the adult risk their children can have.

Key words: weight reduction failure, obesity



Santos Children's Hospital between 1992 and 1999. Dr. Awadalla is Assistant Professor of Pediatric Endocrinology at Universidad El Rosario and the University Foundation for Health Sciences, Hospital San José, Bogotá, Colombia. He has carried out 49 research papers presented at National and International Congresses, many of them published in journals related to Pediatric Endocrinology. Among others, the topics presented or published have referred to hypothalamic-pituitary lesions and the response to treatment with growth hormone, growth hormone and the postoperative period of cardiovascular surgery, IGF-I and nutrition, IGF-I and neonates with intrauterine growth retardation, early sexual development, effects of glucocorticoids, exogenous obesity, etc. He has been Guest Editor of the Magazines "Pediatric Updates" of the Santa Fe de Bogotá Foundation, from 2000 to 2004. He is a regular participant of the European Society of Pediatric Endocrinology from 1993 to date.

Speaker Publications:

1. Laparoscopic appendectomy versus open appendectomy in children
2. Managing newborn ileostomies
3. An unusual cause of acute scrotum in a child



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Biography:

His training in Pediatrics (1987-1990) was carried out at the LV De Santos Children's Hospital, Universidad El Rosario, Colombia. She was perfected in Pediatric Endocrinology at the same Hospital (1990-1991), as well as at the Necker Enfants Malades Hospital in Paris, France (1991-1992). She then worked in the Pediatric Endocrinology Service of the LV De