

A study of patterns and determinants of junk food consumption among students

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Abstract

To know the patterns of junk food consumption among adolescent students. To study the socio-demographic factors influencing the junk food consumption.

Introduction

Junk foods seem to have engulfed every age; every race and the newest entrants are adolescents. The years between 10-19 are a time of rapid growth; good nutrition is a high priority. Adolescents must know that what they eat affects how they grow, feel and behave. Junk food consumption has both direct and indirect relationship in the chain of natural history of most of the non communicable diseases thereby giving us a window of opportunity to attack these weak links to arrest the disease processes, for which first we have to understand the patterns and determinants of junk food consumption among the adolescents.

Methodology

Study setting: Urban field practice area of Vijayanagara Institute of Medical Sciences, Bellary

Study design

School-based cross-sectional study Sampling: Simple random sampling.

Sample size

Total number of students covered 760, out of which 60 (7.9%) questionnaires were later not included, due to more than 10% unanswered questions and thus our final sample size was worked out to be 700, giving an overall response rate of 92.1%.

Method of data collection

Pretested and validated, close and open ended, self administered, anonymous questionnaire was administered to collect the data.

Statistical analysis

A database was created in MS Excel and after appropriate cleaning; analysis was performed using SPSS Ver 11.0.1. Appropriate descriptive statistics were used to analyse the findings and to draw the inferences.

Results

Most of the study subjects were males (63.6%) and in the age group of 14-16 years (60.9%). Most preferred sweet junk food was chocolates 214(30.6%) followed by cakes 190 (27.1%) and the most preferred salted junk food was chats 166(23.7%) and followed by fried pokodas, somosa, mirchi 93(13.2%). Most of the adolescents have junk food because it is very tasty 547(78.1%) and just for a change 131(18.7) and some adolescents feel that having junk food in one way of socializing with friends 112(16%).