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An assessment of the perception of physical activity, eating habits, self-efficacy and the knowledge about healthy food in Albanian adolescents

Robert Çitozi, Dhurata Bozo, Genti Pano

Abstract

Objective: The present study evaluates eating habits and behaviors, and nutritional and food safety knowledge of a group of Albanian adolescents. Design: A dietary questionnaire previously constructed and tested was self-administered during school time. Each section was evaluated using a separate score. Setting: The study was carried out as a part of a nutritional surveillance project in the

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capital of Albania, Tirana. Subjects:

Three hundred and forty (340) adolescent subjects (180 males, 160 females), aged 15.2 ± 0.5 years, attending the 8-9 years of secondary schools participated in the study.

Measures: We evaluated eating habits, physical activity, meaning of healthy and unhealthy dietary habits and food, self-efficacy, barriers affecting healthy food choices, nutritional and food safety, weight, height, Body Mass Index (BMI).

Results: Only 33.1% of the samples have satisfactory eating habits; 16.8% have a very active lifestyle; only 7.9% have quite good nutritional knowledge. Conclusions:

The results point out unhealthy behaviors influencing adolescents' eating habits and suggest which of these must be considered in order to develop tailored nutrition interventions, improving adolescents' consciousness aimed at adopting a healthy lifestyle.

Key words: DIETARY
QUESTIONNAIRE; EDUCATIONAL
PROGRAMS; EATING HABITS AND
BEHAVIORS; ADOLESCENTS

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