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Prevalence of obesity and its association with diet among 13-years old Omani school children

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Obesity is a global health disorder and the WHO considers obesity as the most serious non-communicable disease worldwide and is closely related to improper diet. All age groups are affected but the problem becomes worse when children are affected. Obesity in children is defined as BMI > 95th percentile as defined in the Expert Committee Recommendations. In the US, childhood obesity is about 11%, overweight is about 25%. Obesity prevalence worldwide is on the increase since 1970 especially in developed countries. A WHO report stated that, approximately 58% of diabetes mellitus, 21% of ischemic heart disease and 8-42% of cancer globally was attributable to obesity. These diseases can affect children and adolescents. Obesity also increase cardiovascular disease and increases the risks of all-cause mortality. Obese children are more likely to become overweight in adulthood than are lean children. Approximately, one half of overweight adolescents and over one-third of overweight children remain obese in adulthoods. The findings of this study provide evidence that unhealthy dietary habits were appears to be associated with obesity in this group of Omani adolescents. The findings of our study provide evidence that unhealthy dietary habits were prevalent in both genders. Therefore, the promotion of healthy lifestyles should be a national public health priority. In addition, there is an urgent need for national policy promoting healthy eating among Omani adolescents.

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