

## Overweight versus underweight in primary and secondary schools in Tehran, 2011

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Obesity is increasing while underweight remains an unsolved health problem among children in developing countries. This study aimed to evaluate the prevalence of overweight, obesity and underweight among school children aged 9-15 years in Tehran, the capital of Iran. This cross sectional survey was conducted on a sample of 2901 students. Twenty-two municipality districts of Tehran divided to five regions based on socioeconomic status and one district in each region selected randomly. Then according to the list in the Department of Education 8 schools were selected randomly from each region. Thereafter students randomly selected using school's office list in each school. Their weight and height were measured using standardized instruments. The body mass index (BMI) of the girls calculated and compared with World Health Organization (WHO). The mean age of the participants was 12.7 (SD = 0.97) years. The prevalence of obesity was 3%; overweight was 14.7%; thin 25.7 % and severe thin 0.1% in secondary school children. The mean age of the participants was 10.6 (SD = 0.71) years. The prevalence of obesity was 12%; overweight was 9.8%; thin 13 % and severe thin 5.6% in primary school children. This shows increasing trend of obesity and overweight during past decade as the obesity among primary schoolchildren is much more than the secondary school children. While almost one in four of children have excess weight, one in six is faced with undernourishment. This is an alarm for policymaker and health professionals to pay attention to children's lifestyles.

**Keywords:** Obesity, Child, Thinness, overweight, prevalence.

### Biography

Mohammad-Reza Sohrabi has completed his General Medical Degree at the age of 23 years and Community Medicine Specialty from Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences. Now he is associate professor of Community Medicine Department at Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences. His research fields are Health risk factors and Health systems. He has published more than 30 papers in reputed journals and serving as Editor-in-Chief of Social Determinants of Health Journal and also an editorial board member of Pediatrics & Therapeutics Journal.

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