Abstract

Title: Obesity-risk behaviors and their associations with body mass index (BMI) in Korean American children.

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Abstract:
AIM AND OBJECTIVES:
The purpose of the paper was to describe obesity-risk behaviors (diet, physical activity, and sedentary behavior) and examine the relationships of the obesity-risk behaviors with body mass index (BMI) in school-aged Korean American children.

BACKGROUND:
Korean American children have a risk of becoming overweight or obese and developing obesity-related complications; however, there is limited research about obesity-risk behaviors in Korean American children.

DESIGN:
A cross-sectional study.

METHODS:
Obesity-risk behaviors of children were assessed with well-validated self-report questionnaires (i.e., Elementary-level School-based Nutrition Monitoring Questionnaire) from children and their mothers. Height and weight of children were measured. Data were analyzed
with bivariate and multivariate analyses using mixed effects models to incorporate the correlation within siblings.

RESULTS:
A total of 170 Korean American children [mean age 10.9 (2.0) years; 52.4% girls; mean BMI 19.3(3.2); 28.7% ≥85 percentiles] participated in the study. Only 38.3% of Korean American children met established recommendations of 5 fruits/vegetables per day; 56.5% met recommendations for more than 3 days per week of vigorous physical activity, and 40.8% met recommendations for less than 2hours of recreational screen time per day. Sixty percent and 88.8% of children met the recommendation of sleep on a weekday and weekend, respectively. Only screen time was positively associated with child BMI Z-score (β=0.08; p<.03).

CONCLUSION:
Health care providers need to be aware of the increased rate of overweight and obesity in Korean American children and initiate clinical interventions to improve obesity-risk behaviors, especially sedentary behavior, in Korean American children.