

## Craving for Sweets and Overweight in Adolescents

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**Background:** The prevalence of obesity has been growing worldwide in all age groups, including adolescents. Inadequate eating behavior and sedentary lifestyle are factors that contribute to the nutritional transition from underweight to obesity. In this sense, the analysis of eating behavior such as craving for sweets is fundamental to better understand the factors that contribute to inadequate eating habits and overweight in adolescence.

**Objective:** To show the association of craving for sweets and overweight among teenagers.

**Methods:** Cross-sectional study was carried out with 132 adolescents, 64 males and 68 females, aged 15-19 years, from a public school located in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil. The Taste Attitude Scale was applied to analyze craving for sweets. The anthropometric and body composition measurements evaluated were weight, height, BMI, skinfold thicknesses and body fat percentage. Statistical analyzes were performed by PASW 17.0 software, with significance level 5%. The study was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the State University of Campinas, Brazil, protocol number 48065215.3.0000.5404.

**Results:** Craving for sweets was associated with overweight, adiposity and physical inactivity ( $P<0.05$ ). Triceps ( $18.33\pm 5.48$  vs  $12.47\pm 5.57$ ), biceps ( $9.88\pm 5.27$  vs  $7.43\pm 4.93$ ), subscapular ( $14.81\pm 6.05$  vs  $11.32\pm 5.40$ ), supra-iliac ( $18.52\pm 6.96$  vs  $13.34\pm 8.30$ ) and abdominal skinfold thicknesses ( $20.22\pm 5.98$  vs  $15.13\pm 7.81$ ) and BF% ( $25.33\pm 6.60$  vs  $15.14\pm 7.47$ ) were higher among females than males ( $P<0.05$ ). Females also had higher craving for sweets score ( $22.88\pm 4.77$  vs  $18.89\pm 5.81$ ) and higher frequency of physical inactivity (64.7% vs 25%) than males ( $P<0.05$ ).

**Conclusion:** Craving for sweets was associated with overweight and physical inactivity in adolescence. These findings allow for the proposition of nutritional education directed at motivating healthier eating and lifestyle habits among teenagers.

### Biography:

Helena Previato is Nutritionist, Master in Health and Nutrition and PhD candidate in Food and Nutrition by University of Campinas (UNICAMP), Brazil. She works as researcher in the area of teenagers' food behavior (food neophobia, craving for sweets and nutrition) in Department of Food and Nutrition, School of Food Engineering, UNICAMP, Brazil. She is member of the Evaluation Commission of Residence in Health, Education Ministry, Brazil. She is Invited Professor in the Postgraduate course in Nutrition, School of Nutrition UNIS, Brazil. She is member of the Editorial Board of several International Scientific Journals in the field of nutrition and food science.