

Overweight in Children and Adolescents as a Predictor of Obesity in Adults

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According to the World Health Organization (WHO), obesity is currently one of the main public health problems and its presence is associated with numerous pathologies, including cardiovascular diseases and the risk of type 2 diabetes, which are not only appear in adulthood, but also in childhood [1]. Let us also remember that there are numerous studies that show that overweight and obesity in childhood have a high risk of perpetuation in adolescence and adulthood, and a greater intensity of overweight is related to an earlier onset, it is estimated that around 50% of overweight schoolchildren will be obese adults and likewise 80% of overweight adolescents will be obese adults. This is linked both to healthy habits such as physical activity and children's nutrition, which are largely responsible for this devastating statistic in Colombia and the world [2]. Similarly, it has been reported that the children of parents with obesity have a greater risk of being obese in adulthood, rising from 50% when it occurs in a single parent to 90% when it involves both, although genetics would play a true determining role, physical activity and diet again have the best evidence for this result [3]. An investigation involving 307,677 Danish people born between 1930 and 1987 and led by Dr. Line Klingen Haugaad, found that the risk of developing obesity and a stroke in early adult life increased by 26% in women and by 21% in men for each unit of increase in overweight in all stages of childhood, but especially at 13 years of age [4]. On the other hand, one of the studies that has included a greater number of subjects, obtained the morbidity and mortality data from coronary disease reported between 1976 and 2001 from 276,835 subjects who had annual weight and height measurements collected when they were 7 to 13 year old. They found that the risk of morbidity and mortality from coronary heart disease in adults was higher for those with higher BMI values in childhood; in addition, the risk values increased as the age of the children was older (7 to 13 years) [5]. In this way, it can be concluded that there are data that associate the presence of overweight or obesity in childhood and adolescence as a predisposing factor to their development in adulthood, but also to the increase in morbidity and mortality in adults, particularly due to cardiovascular diseases. The increase in the prevalence of overweight and obesity that has occurred in recent decades and changes in lifestyle could contribute to the increase and early presentation of these alterations, therefore, measures such as a healthy diet should be taken, the promotion of the game and, on the recommendation of the WHO, perform 60 minutes of physical activity daily [6].

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