

prevalence of success in achieving this objective in the group of patients treated with Levosimendan, with statistical significance [5,6]. After the medication was given, there was a significant improvement in the clinical status of patients, demonstrated by a mean increase of 35% in LVEF. Another important fact was that no side effects occurred during the process of administering the drug, in accordance with data described previously.

With reference to the use of Levosimendan, it is important to emphasize that there is a lack of studies with placebo groups, to ensure that the benefits described are a result of the drug and not side effects of other medications. We have described, according to the medical literature, the first cases of myocarditis due to acute Chagas' disease treated with Levosimendan, with excellent therapeutic results.

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Risk factors for overweight in urban and rural school girls in Iran: Skipping breakfast and early menarche

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the predictors of overweight among Iranian 14–17 years adolescent girls in urban and rural areas in Guilan, Iran. Between December 2005 and March 2006 a cross-sectional survey on 2090 high-school girls (1054 in urban and 1036 in rural areas) in *Guilan*, northern Iran was performed. Data on age, mother's education, age at menarche, physical activity, hours of TV viewing, birth weight, duration of any breast feeding and skipping breakfast were collected using questionnaire and body weight and height of the girls were measured. Logistic regression analysis showed that in urban residents, low age group (14 years) OR=13.9 (1.15–1.61), lower menarcheal age OR=0.76 (0.61–0.95) and skipping breakfast OR=1.96 (1.52–2.35) were independently related to overweight and obesity. In rural residents, low menarcheal age, OR=0.82 (0.69–0.98), skipping breakfast OR=2.23 (1.37–3.65), and high maternal education OR=2.01 (1.62–2.85) were predictors of overweight/obesity. In conclusion, these data indicated that skipping breakfast is a potential risk factor for overweight/obesity in both urban and rural girls. High maternal education as a risk factor for overweight in the rural girls is notable. © 2008 Elsevier Ireland Ltd. All rights reserved.

Keywords: Adolescents; Educational level; Menarche; Skipping breakfast; Iran; Obesity

1. Introduction

The prevalence of overweight is increasing among children and adolescents in many middle-income countries

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Table 1
TV viewing, skipping breakfast, walking and menarche age in the study girls by their weight status and urban–rural residence.

	Urban		Rural	
	Normal	Overweight	Normal	Overweight
Walking (%) (min/day)				
<5	9	8.9	9.1	4.9
5–15	30.4	33.1	25.6	30.3
15–30	29.7	27.4	33.8	42.3
30–45	16.2	16.1	16.7	12.7
>45	14.7	14.5	14.9	9.9
TV viewing (h/day)				
<3	61.2	52.9	66.1	77.8
3–5	27.9	27.7	23.5	11.1
>5	10.9	19.3	9.9	11.1
Skipping breakfast (%)	53 ^a	63.7	47.9 ^a	65.7
Menarcheal age (years)	12.9±1.0*	12.6±1.1	12.8±1.0**	12.6±1.2
Birth weight (kg)	3.1±0.4	3.2±0.6	3.0±0.4	3.2±0.4
Duration of breast feeding (month)	13.5±11.5	14.1±9.7	16.4±5.4	15.9±6.7

* $p < 0.002$ ** $p < 0.05$.

^a $p < 0.0001$.

[1,2]. Childhood and adolescents obesity is a very important issue since it is not only associated with increased risk of becoming obese adults [3] but also is independently related to coronary artery disease in adulthood [4].

Recent studies show that metabolic syndrome is highly prevalent among Iranian adolescents [5]. Available data show that the number of overweight/obese adolescents has been doubled during the past two decades in Iran [6]. This rapid increase suggests that environmental factors are strongly implicated in this epidemic.

The knowledge of overweight and obesity among children and adolescents can help in adopting of population preventive measures.

This study examined the predictors of overweight among school girls in urban and rural areas in Guilan, northern Iran.

2. Subjects and method

This study is part of an epidemiological survey, designed to evaluate the current status of overweight/obesity among high-school girls in urban/rural areas in *Guilan*, northern Iran. The study population was 14–17 year school girls living in *Rasht*, the main city of *Guilan* province, and rural areas in this province. Between December 2005 and March 2006 a random sample of 2323 school girls studying in high school in urban and rural areas were selected with no exclusion criteria. Since 233 students' age were not in the range of the protocol they were excluded and 2090 observation included in data analysis (1036 in *Rasht* city and 1054 in rural areas).

Data on age, mothers' education, hours of television watching or computer games, frequency of skipping break-

fast per week, physical activity, age at menarche were collected using self administrated questionnaire. Birth weight as well as duration of any breast feeding of their girls was asked from the parents using questionnaires. Breakfast frequency was asked as, how many times during a week day do you eat breakfast? Responses categories were never, 1–2 times per week, most times per week. A physical activity questionnaire was developed for this study that asked the participants to recall the number of hours per week within the last 6 month during which they participated in any structured physical activity or team sport. Responses categories ranged from 0 to 8 h/week. Commuting between home and school were asked as 5 classes (less than 5 min/day, 5–15 min/day, 15–30 min/day, 30–45 min/day and more than 45 min/day). Anthropometric measurements were performed in lightly dressed adolescents without shoes in the morning. Age and sex specific BMI cut off points proposed by International Obesity task Force (IOTF) was used to define overweight and obesity [7].

The study protocol was approved by the ethical committee of *Guilan* University of Medical Sciences.

2.1. Statistical analysis

Differences in mean values and frequency of the measured variables between groups were tested using Student *t* test and Chi square statistics. Low educational groups in rural and urban areas were defined with mothers' level of education as less than 7 and 12 years of schooling, respectively. Logistic regression analysis was used to determine the predictors of overweight and obesity in the study girls in urban and rural areas separately. Values were given as the mean and standard deviation or 95% confidence intervals were appropriate. *p*-values less than 0.05 were considered as the level of significance. Analyses were performed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 10.01 for windows, SPSS Inc® headquarter, Chicago, IL, USA).

Table 2

Logistic regression analysis of the potential risk factors for overweight/obesity in the study girls adjusted for each variable: maternal educational level, TV viewing, walking, skipping breakfast as categorical variables and age, birth weight and age at menarche as continues variables.

	$\beta \pm SE$	OR (95% CI)	<i>p</i> -value
<i>Urban</i>			
Age	-0.25±0.11	0.77 (0.61–0.97)	0.02
Menarcheal age	-0.26±0.11	0.76 (0.61–0.95)	0.01
Skipping breakfast	-0.48±0.23	1.96 (1.52–2.35)	0.03
Constant	6.51±2.13	–	0.002
<i>Rural</i>			
Menarcheal age	-0.18±0.08	0.82 (0.69–0.98)	0.03
Skipping breakfast	-0.70±0.20	2.23 (1.37–3.65)	0.001
Maternal educational level	-0.58±0.20	2.01 (1.62–2.85)	0.004
Constant	1.90±1.15	–	0.09

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