



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Effects of a psychological intervention on the quality of life of obese adolescents under a multidisciplinary treatment[☆]

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KEYWORDS

Multidisciplinary
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Abstract

Objective: To investigate the effects of multidisciplinary treatment with and without psychological counseling on obese adolescents' self-reported quality of life.

Methods: Seventy-six obese adolescents (15.87 ± 1.53 y) were allocated into psychological counseling group (PCG; $n=36$) or control group (CG; $n=40$) for 12 weeks. All participants received the same supervised exercise training, nutritional and clinical counseling. Participants in PCG also received psychological counseling. QOL was measured before and after 12 weeks of intervention by Generic Questionnaire for the Evaluation of Quality of Life (SF-36).

Results: The dropout rate was higher in GC (22.5%) when compared with PCG (0.0%) ($p < 0.001$). After 12 weeks, participants from PCG presents lower body weight, relative fat mass and higher free fat mass ($p < 0.001$ for all) compared to GC. QOL improved among adolescents from both groups ($p < 0.05$), however, a better QOL was reported from those adolescents enrolled in PCG.

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PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Intervenção
multidisciplinar;
Adolescentes obesos;
Aconselhamento
psicológico

Conclusion: The inclusion of a psychological counseling component in multidisciplinary treatment for adolescent obesity appears to provide benefits observed for improved QOL as compared with treatment without psychological counseling.

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Efeitos de uma intervenção psicológica sobre a qualidade de vida de adolescentes obesos em tratamento multidisciplinar

Resumo

Objetivo: Para investigar os efeitos do tratamento multidisciplinar com e sem aconselhamento psicológico voltado à qualidade de vida de adolescentes obesos.

Métodos: 76 adolescentes obesos ($15,87 \pm 1,53$ ano) foram alocados em um grupo de aconselhamento psicológico e (GAP; $n = 36$) ou grupo de controle (GC; $n = 40$) por 12 semanas. Todos os participantes receberam o mesmo treinamento físico supervisionado e aconselhamento nutricional e clínico. Os participantes no GAP também receberam aconselhamento psicológico. A qualidade de vida foi avaliada antes e depois das 12 semanas de intervenção por meio de um Questionário Genérico de Avaliação da Qualidade de Vida (SF-36).

Resultados: O abandono do tratamento foi maior no GC (22,5%), em comparação ao GAP (0,0%) ($p < 0,001$). Após 12 semanas, os participantes do GAP apresentam menor peso corporal, massa gorda relativa e maior massa livre de gordura ($p < 0,001$ para todos) em comparação ao GC. A qualidade de vida melhorou entre os adolescentes de ambos os grupos ($p < 0,05$); contudo, uma melhor qualidade de vida foi relatada pelos adolescentes incluídos no GAP.

Conclusão: A inclusão de aconselhamento psicológico no tratamento multidisciplinar dos adolescentes obesos parece proporcionar benefícios observados na melhoria da qualidade de vida, em comparação ao tratamento sem aconselhamento psicológico.

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Introduction

Obesity and its associated risk factors have become a major public health concern.¹⁻⁴ The worldwide prevalence of overweight among children and adolescents (aged 5–17 years) is estimated at 21.4% for girls and 22.9% for boys.⁵ In Brazil, the prevalence of childhood and adolescent overweight/obesity ranges from 4% to 37% in the different regions of the country.⁶

Studies show that adolescence obesity is associated with an increased likelihood of depression, anxiety, and eating disorders, which may affect quality of life (QOL).⁷⁻⁹ Studies have demonstrated lower QOL in the physical, psychosocial, emotional, and school functioning domains among obese children and adolescents when compared with their normal weight peers¹⁰⁻¹²; a multidisciplinary behavioral treatment positively impacts QOL in this population.¹³ In fact, multidisciplinary behavioral interventions composed by regular physical activity, nutrition, and psychological counseling have been widely acclaimed as the most effective approach for treating obesity.^{14,15} Moreover, such interventions appear to be more effective with children/adolescents than adults.¹⁶

Improvements in weight and body composition are common as a result of a multidisciplinary behavioral treatment for obesity.¹⁰ Improvements in psychological well-being and quality of life are common as well.^{8,9,17-19} Better psychological outcomes may result from changes in weight status

and body composition following an increase in participants' physical activity levels and improvements in eating behavior. These psychological outcomes may also be directly related to a treatment including psychological counseling; however, to the best of the authors' knowledge, none of the previous researches were conducted to verify the contribution of psychological counseling on QOL in obese adolescents submitted to a multidisciplinary therapy. Psychological counseling targets a broad variety of factors, such as physical, psychosocial, emotional, and school functioning in the context of changing health-related behaviors. As such, psychological counseling per se could be affecting changes in psychological outcomes and adolescents' QOL beyond the effects observed as a result of changes in weight status or body composition. Thus, the main purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of a multidisciplinary treatment for adolescent obesity with and without psychological counseling on participants' self-reported quality of life. Secondary outcomes included therapy adherence, and anthropometric and body composition measures.

Methods

Sample

Study participants from both genders were recruited between 2011 and 2012 through advertisements in local

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