

**МЕДИЦИНА, ПЕДАГОГИКА И ТЕХНОЛОГИЯ:
ТЕОРИЯ И ПРАКТИКА**

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Том 3, Выпуск 04, Апрель

**OVERWEIGHT AND OBESITY AMONG YOUTH: CAUSES AND
PREVENTION MEASURES**

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Abstract: This study aims to investigate the issue of overweight and obesity among young people. During the study, eating habits, physical activity levels, and psychological state were analyzed among respondents aged 12-18. The results showed that the consumption of fast food and sugary drinks is one of the main causes of being overweight. Lack of physical activity and high stress levels also exacerbate the problem. Based on these results, the need for education, encouragement of physical activity, and psychological support to develop a healthy lifestyle and solve the problem is emphasized.

Keywords: youth, overweight, obesity, eating habits, physical activity, psychological state, healthy lifestyle, stress, education, food policy

Introduction: In recent years, overweight and obesity have become widespread among young people around the world. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the obesity rate among children and adolescents aged 5-19 years in 2022 was 6.4%. Uzbekistan is no exception to this global trend. In the current era, the deterioration of the environment and the development of technologies, the increase in the number of food products that are harmful to humans, year by year, leads to the accumulation and thickening of the fat layer in the body. Previously, the number of obese people was less than today. Today, in every family you will find at least one person with high blood pressure, diabetes, and overweight. The main reasons are: unhealthy eating habits, excessive consumption of fast food, sweets, and high-calorie products, irregular eating habits (eating late at night, eating too often), lack of physical activity, addiction to computers and mobile devices, lack of regular exercise, psychological factors, stress, depression, low self-esteem, trying to control emotions through food, hereditary and biological factors, obesity in family members, hormonal disorders (for example, thyroid dysfunction).

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As the insulin hormone increases in the body, the fat layer also increases accordingly. Eating high-carbohydrate foods (pastries, sweets), that is, foods that increase the insulin hormone, and not doing physical activity, accordingly, increases the tendency to become obese. So, unhealthy eating and inactivity lead to excess weight. As a result, this creates a favorable environment for the development of a number of concomitant diseases.

Why are there cases of overweight among adolescents and young children? Among those who are really struggle with excess weight, there are 10-11 year old children. The average weight of children of this age should be 35-40 kilograms, and their weight can reach 70-80 kilograms. This can be attributed to the wrong diet of parents for their children. Because where do parents take their children to make them happy when they have achieved something, have received excellent grades at school? Of course, to places where fast food (fries, hamburgers, pizza) is prepared. Gradually, this habit becomes a habit, and the child develops a tendency to eat such foods regularly. If you pay attention, today most children do not enjoy home-made dishes such as stews and soups, and fast food is their soul. There is another important aspect of children's improper diet. This is their eating while watching TV. When a child eats while watching TV or on the phone, the brain does not have time to send a signal to the stomach that food is coming, and the food they eat is not digested properly.

Materials and Methods: The following materials and methods were used to study overweight and obesity among young people. The study involved young people aged 12-18 years. They were selected from groups living in different socio-economic situations. Respondents were given questionnaires to collect information about health, eating habits, physical activity levels and psychological well-being. The questionnaires consist of the following sections: personal information (age, gender, marital status), eating habits (type of food, portion size, consumption of fast food), physical activity (sports activities, physical training), psychological state (stress level, mental health). The method of collecting information using questionnaires allows us to study the opinions and experiences of respondents. The data obtained were analyzed using statistical methods. Existing scientific literature and studies on the topic were studied. This method helped us to understand the problem more deeply. General indicators were calculated about the demographic data of the respondents, eating habits and level of physical activity.

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Results: According to statistics, overweight among children under 5 years of age: In 2022, the overweight rate among children under 5 years of age in Uzbekistan was 4.2%. Obesity among children and adolescents aged 5-19: In 2022, the obesity rate in this age group reached 6.4%. Overweight among adults: In 2023, 50% of the population of Uzbekistan aged 18-64 were overweight, and 20% of them suffered from obesity.

The results of the study on overweight and obesity among young people include the following key indicators and analyses: Demographics of respondents: Age groups: 12-14 years: 30%, 15-16 years: 40%, 17-18 years: 30%. Gender: Girls: 55%, boys: 45%. When asked about eating habits: Fast food consumption: More than 70% of respondents eat fast food 3-4 times a week. Calorie-rich drinks: 65% of respondents consume sugary drinks every day, and 30% of them do so several times. Healthy food consumption: Only 25% of respondents reported consuming 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day. Physical activity level: More than 50% of respondents engage in physical activity 1-2 times a week. 20% of respondents do not engage in physical activity at all. Stress level: 40% of respondents reported experiencing high levels of stress. 30% of respondents have experienced mental health problems. 30% of respondents are overweight and 15% are obese. Obesity rates are 35% among girls and 25% among boys. A negative correlation has been found between eating habits and physical activity. Young people who consume fast food are less likely to participate in physical activity. Psychological state and overweight: A higher incidence of overweight was observed among respondents with high stress levels.

Conclusion: The results show the seriousness of the problem of overweight and obesity among young people. Consumption of fast food, lack of physical activity and psychological problems exacerbate this problem. These results are important for promoting a healthy lifestyle and developing measures to solve the problem. 20% of respondents are overweight, and 15% are obese. This may lead to an increase in health problems among young people. Consumption of fast food and sugary drinks is high, which leads to excess weight gain. Consumption of healthy foods remains low.

There is a lack of physical activity. 20% of respondents do not engage in physical activity at all, which poses a health risk.

Stress and mental health problems can lead to overeating. 25% of respondents reported experiencing high levels of stress.

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There is a negative correlation between eating habits and physical activity. A higher incidence of being overweight has been observed among young people with high levels of stress.

The increase in overweight and obesity among young people poses a serious health risk. The cooperation of society, family, educational institutions and the health system plays an important role in preventing this problem. Through a comprehensive approach, it is possible to maintain the health of young people and direct them to an active lifestyle.

Recommendations:

- Develop healthy eating habits
- Eat more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains
- Limit sugar and fat
- Eat at regular meal times
- Increase physical activity
- Walk or exercise for at least 30 minutes a day
- Effectively organize physical education classes in schools
- Stress management training
- Self-love and body acceptance classes

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