

Exercise Frequency and Eating Behaviors: A Study with Portuguese Adolescents

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Background: Exercise is positively associated with physical health and psychological well-being. These benefits have been well documented among adults, but fewer studies analyzed the benefits of exercise to younger people (Sallis, Prochaska, & Taylor, 2000). So, it becomes interesting to know the relation between exercise frequency and some health routines, like eating behaviors. This study analyzed the relation between the frequency of exercise and the tendency to eating disorder behaviors. **Methods:** This survey descriptive study included 192 Portuguese adolescents, divided into the occasional and regular exercise groups. It was evaluated the eating disorder behaviors (Fairburn & Beglin, 1994), the dieting status (Strong & Huon, 1997), and the physical activity of adolescents (Kowalski, Crocker, & Kowalski, 1997). **Findings:** Adolescents who exercised regularly assumed less eating disorder behaviors and less tendency to dieting behaviors. **Discussion:** This study reinforces the importance of regular exercise on the prevention of problematic eating behaviors in adolescence.