

Levels of physical activity and excess body weight in university students

[Factores de riesgo asociados a bajo nivel de actividad física y exceso de peso corporal en estudiantes universitarios]

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Background: University students are considered a vulnerable group due to their adoption of unhealthy diets and lifestyles. **Aim:** To determine the main risk factors associated with low level of physical activity and excess body weight in university students. **Material and Methods:** This cross-sectional study included 358 university students from Talca, (53% female).

Sociodemographic, academic, health, lifestyle, nutritional status, physical activity and sedentary behavior variables were analyzed by logistic regression. **Results:** Men were more likely to present excess body weight than women (Odds ratio (OR): 2.16 [95% CI: 1.17-4.01], $p = 0.01$). Similarly, those with low level of physical activity (OR: 2.13 [95% CI: 1.10-4.14], $p = 0.03$), musculoskeletal injuries (OR: 2.43 [95% CI: 1.09-6.34], $p = 0.05$) and smokers (OR: 2.09 [95% CI: 1.05-4.14], $p = 0.04$) were more likely to have excess body weight. Individuals with excess body weight (OR: 2.94 [95% CI: 1.31-6.61], $p < 0.01$), high sedentary behaviors (OR: 2.01 [95% CI: 1.04-4.55], $p = 0.04$), those who spent more than 7 hours per week studying (OR: 2.11 [95% CI: 1.06-4.66], $p = 0.04$), and those with presence of musculoskeletal injuries (OR: 1.49 [95% CI: 1.06-3.66], $p = 0.04$) were more likely to be physically inactive. In addition, men were 73% less likely to have low physical activity levels compared to women (OR: 0.27 [95% CI: 0.11-0.56], $p < 0.01$). **Conclusions:** University students have several modifiable risk factors associated with low levels of physical activity and excess weight. Healthy lifestyles promotion should modify these risk behaviors. (Rev Med Chile

Adolescent

Exercise

Obesity

Risk factors

Students

adult

Chile

cross-sectional study

epidemiology

exercise

female

human

male

motor activity

nutritional status

obesity

pathophysiology

questionnaire

risk factor

sex factor

socioeconomics

statistics and numerical data

student

university

young adult

Adult

Chile

Cross-Sectional Studies

Exercise

Female

Humans

Male

Motor Activity

Nutritional Status

Obesity

Overweight

Risk Factors

Sedentary Behavior

Sex Factors

Socioeconomic Factors

Students

Surveys and Questionnaires

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Young Adult