

The role of nutrition in the prevention of childhood obesity: a systematic review

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1 INTRODUCTION

Childhood obesity is a globally recognized public health problem with significant long-term health consequences. Diet plays a key role in the development and prevention of childhood obesity. According to Rosenbaum et al. (2014), childhood obesity is associated with an increased risk of developing comorbidities such as type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease in adulthood. Therefore, it is essential to understand the relationship between nutrition and childhood obesity prevention in order to develop effective intervention strategies.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Epidemiological studies have shown an association between poor dietary patterns and a higher risk of childhood obesity. According to Mammen & Faulkner (2013), diets high in ultra-processed foods, added sugars, and saturated fats have been consistently associated with a higher body mass index (BMI) and adiposity in children. On the other hand, a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins has been linked to a lower risk of childhood obesity.

3 METHODOLOGY

To evaluate the relationship between nutrition and the prevention of childhood obesity, a systematic review of the literature was conducted using the PubMed, Scopus and Web of Science databases. Search terms used included "child nutrition," "childhood obesity," "healthy eating," and "obesity prevention." Studies published in the last 10 years that investigated the relationship between nutrition and the prevention of childhood obesity in pediatric populations were included.

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4 RESULTS

Analysis of the studies included in this systematic review revealed that nutritional intervention strategies based on food education, promotion of healthy foods, and restriction of unhealthy foods have the potential to reduce the risk of childhood obesity. According to Gordon et al. (2017), intervention programs that aim to modify the school food environment, promote exclusive breastfeeding, and encourage the practice of family meals have also been shown to be effective in preventing childhood obesity.

5 DISCUSSION

The results of this systematic review highlight the importance of nutrition in the prevention of childhood obesity. Nutritional intervention strategies that promote healthy eating from childhood can have a significant impact on reducing the prevalence of obesity and its associated complications. However, as pointed out by Hallgren et al. (2018), more research is needed to assess the long-term effectiveness of these interventions and identify more efficient and sustainable approaches.

6 CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this systematic review, it is evident that nutrition plays a crucial role in the prevention of childhood obesity. The implementation of public policies and nutritional intervention programs that promote healthy eating from childhood is essential to address this growing public health problem.

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