

## Dietary habits and physical activity level among school-going adolescents: A cross-sectional study in A.M.U., Aligarh

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**Introduction:** Physical activity and diet go hand in hand for the maintenance of good health. This becomes even more important in school-going adolescent students as they are readily exposed to a wide variety of junk food items either inside or around their school premises and lead increasingly sedentary lifestyles as they progress through their academics. This study was done to assess the junk food intake and physical activity level among school-going adolescents.

**Material and method:** This cross-sectional study was conducted among 800 school-based adolescents aged 12 to 14 years at A.M.U. High Schools, Aligarh, from July 2018 to June 2019. Students were asked about their physical activity and dietary habits by disseminating a self-reported questionnaire. The data were analyzed in SPSS version 20.0.

**Results:** majority of the adolescents had a moderate level of physical activity (53%), while 23% of the students had high and 24% had low physical activity levels. On the analysis of the dietary habits of the students, it was found that only 23.5% of students were able to take the recommended intake of fruits, 14.75%, 37.25% and 9.25% were able to follow the dietary recommendations for vegetables, dairy and cereals respectively; A staggering 70.75% more than the recommended intake of junk food items. The association between physical activity and vegetables and fruits and junk food intake was found to be significant while the dairy intake was not significant.

**Conclusion:** More emphasis should be given to limiting junk food intake and increasing healthy food intake along with motivating the students to be more physically active. This can be done by encouraging the family as well as teachers at the school level and creating more spaces for children to be physically active at the community level.

### Biography

Athar Ansari after completing the Doctor of Medicine course in Community Medicine in 1998, he joined the faculty in the Department of Community Medicine, J.N. Medical College in 1999. He has been awarded a PhD in Community Medicine in 2016. He has been awarded the Fellowship of the Indian Association of Preventive and Social Medicine in 2017. He is teaching undergraduate and postgraduate medical students and has also been involved in the training of medical interns in health programmes for the last 25 years. He is involved in research activities directed toward micronutrient deficiencies, HIV/AIDS, disaster management and environmental health issues. He has got 144 papers published in national and international journals. He has presented papers at 09 international conferences and 152 papers in national/state conferences. He has been Coordinator/Principal Investigator/Co-investigator/Supervisor of various prestigious projects of different agencies like UNICEF, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Govt. of India.

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