

Abstract

Weight loss intention, physical activity and sedentary behavior among African American Adolescents

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Objective

To examine associations between intention and health behaviors among African American Adolescents.

Methods

The study included 439 overweight adolescents and 478 African-American adolescents in the Youth Risk Behavioral Survey, who were identified using CDC growth charts. Multivariable analysis was used to assess the association of weight loss intention with physical activity, and sedentary behavior.

Results

Most overweight (30.8%) and obese (41.7%) adolescents reported that they intended to lose weight. These were more likely to be obese (OR = 2.93, 95% CI = 2.00-4.30) and female (OR = 4.46, 95% CI = 3.00-6.46).

Despite having weight loss intentions, compared to those with no weight loss intention, adolescents who intended to lose weight were less likely to report being physically active at least 60 minutes per day on five or more days (OR = 0.47, 95% CI = 0.32-0.68), and engaging in exercise to strengthen their muscles on three or more days (OR = 0.46, 95% CI = 0.31-0.69). Those who reported intention to lose weight were more likely to report playing video/computer games or using a computer ≥ 3 hours per day (OR = 1.58, 95% CI = 1.09-2.28). However, they were just as likely as those with no weight loss intention to report watching television ≥ 3 hours per day (OR = 0.86, 95% CI = 0.59-1.25).

Conclusion

Adolescents who intend to lose weight may need appropriate and effective guidance and support to overcome barriers to physical activity and make desirable behavior changes.

Epidemiology Public health or related research Social and behavioral sciences

