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Topic: Community health and nutrition programs

Title: Advising overweight persons to control weight by Lithuanian health care professionals in 2000-2014

Presentation Type: Poster

Introduction:

Our study aimed to assess changes in advising overweight persons to lose weight by health care professionals (HCP) over fourteen years and to determine whether reported attempts to lose weight were associated with the advices.

Methods:

The data were obtained from eight biennial cross-sectional nationally representative postal surveys from 2000 to 2014. In total, 8738 men and 11822 women aged 25-64 participated in these surveys. Self-reported body weight and height were used to calculate BMI. Information on whether health professionals advised overweight persons to control weight was obtained.

Results:

During study period proportion of obese persons being advised by HCP to control their weight increased from 25.9% in 2004 to 49.6% in 2014 in men and from 32.3% to 43.8% in women. In 2014, 46.7% of obese respondents reported that their HCP advised them to lose weight, 48.2% were advised to change their diet and 20.7% were advised to increase physical activity. Only small part of overweight persons were advised to change their weight or lifestyle habits. Older, better educated, having higher BMI were more likely to receive advices to lose weight. Obese men and women who reported receiving advices were more likely to report attempts to lose weight than those who were not advised (OR 4.1; 95% CI 2.42-6.79 and OR 2.8; 95% CI 1.85-4.34 respectively).

Conclusions:

Although HCP became more active in giving advices for controlling weight of obese persons, still existing barriers to counselling need to be identified and strategies put in place to overcome them.

