

ASSESSMENT OF NUTRITIONAL DISORDERS IN CHILDREN

V. Marias, V. Dimosthenous, P. Neou, X. Koumanzeli, M.S. Lariou,
K. Tsoumakas, L. Stamoyannou

1st. Department of Paediatrics, 'P. & A. Kyriakou' Children's Hospital, Athens, Greece
vazmaria@otenet.gr

The aim of our study was the nutritional assessment of a randomly selected sample of 750 children (1-14 years) admitted in the emergency ward of our hospital during a three month period. For each child the following information was recorded: weight, height, sex, age, origin, type and region/place of habitat, parent's profession and number of children in family and the % Ideal Body Weight (IBW) calculated. Severity of failure to thrive (FTT) was based on the Waterloo criteria: grade I = 80-90%IBW, II = 70-80%IBW, III <70%IBW. Severity of obesity was also based on %IBW: mild: 130-150%IBW, moderate: 150-170%IBW, severe: >170%IBW. 100 (13,33%) children (67 boys and 33 girls) had nutritional disorders. Their mean age was 6, 64 years (Stdv 3. 83, 0.46-14 y). 39 of these children had FTT (24 I, 11 II and 4 III) and 61 were obese (38 mild, 8 moderate and 15 severe). The mean values of %IBW with respect to sex and age were calculated. A statistically significant correlation was found between age and the severity of obesity ($p < 0.005$, Kruskal-Wallis test). None of the obese children and only 10% of the children with FTT was investigated for their problem. The % of children with severe obesity and FTT were 15% and 4% respectively. Obesity appears to be more severe in older children and independent of sex and the examined socio-economic factors while FTT independent of all factors. It appears that parents are minimally concerned with the nutritional disorders of their children, especially with obesity.

