Reviewer's report

Title: Fruit and vegetable intake and characteristics associated among adolescents from southern Brazil

Version: 1 Date: 19 February 2012

Reviewer: Jalila El Ati

Reviewer's report:

• General comments
The paper presents data on the intake of fruits and vegetables and their association with various socio-demographic and lifestyle factors, among adolescents, based on a cross-sectional survey conducted in Southern Brazil. This is an interesting contribution since such data are not frequent for children. It is well written, and the methodology globally appears sound, though some more details would probably be useful for interested readers. However, several issues need to be addressed.

• Major Compulsory Revisions
1) Study design and population: authors present briefly the sampling methodology used. Could they elaborate a little more on the procedure for better understanding of when the survey has been done? What exactly was this sample representative of, how many households were invited to take part, what was the response rate, and tell us what kind of sampling weighting was performed?

2) Diet evaluation: as FFQ was used to assess foods intake, authors give a brief account of its design, as it has already been described in a previous paper (however the reader should be able to correctly understand the procedure used without referring to another paper). Could the authors more describe how the food list has been selected? What role did the interviewer have in the strength of the results? Specific questions about fruits and vegetables intake during the 24h before the interview were added while the FFQ was validated and daily rate: why and what kind of questions were asked? What was the portion size of “rice and beans” being serving of vegetable?

3) Results: authors decided to include in five-a-day “rice and beans”, a typical
dish in Brazil (i.e. cereal & vegetable). It would be helpful to generate both five-a-day results: with and without “rice and beans”, and assess the factors underling the two programs.

4) Discussion: obesity was more prevalent among Brazilian boys vs. girls whereas quantitative estimated intake of fruits and vegetables intake was higher. No relations between corpulence and consumption of fruits or/and vegetables were find in this study. These results needed to be more critiqued and compared with findings of others authors.

• Minor essential revisions
  1) Results, first paragr.: “Table 1 shows that boys and girls were similar regarding .........., and smoking”, should be added.
  2) In abstract, conclusion is not pertinent. Please improve it.

• Minor corrections
  1) Could the authors add in the document number of page and use double line?
  2) Figure 1 is unreadable and poor quality: it should be improved.
  3) Ethic considerations were presented twice on page 3 and page 5; the repeat should be deleted.
  4) Results, first line “aged 12 to 19 years” and not “18 years”
  5) Note: MG appears in the author contribution section, but does not appear in the authors list under the Title.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests