

NUTRITIONAL BEHAVIORS OF A GROUP OF CRACOW GRAMMAR-SCHOOL
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Introduction. A balanced diet helps to improve exercise capacity and optimization of development processes of young athletes.

Objective. Evaluation of eating behaviors within a group of Cracow grammar school students practicing sports in the context of qualitative recommendations of the Swiss nutrition pyramid for people with increased physical activity.

Material and methods. The study was conducted in a group of 220 people, including 120 boys and 100 girls aged 13–15 years, studying in sports-oriented grammar schools in Cracow, practicing volleyball, football and basketball. A validated, authorial questionnaire of eating behaviors was applied, and statistical analysis was performed using a chi-square test in PQStat v.1.6.0.428 program.

Results. From the point of view of the recommendations of the Swiss pyramid, the youths usually consumed at least 3 meals a day (85.5%), with cereal products in every meal (78.2%). They often preferred mineral water and other unsweetened beverages (72.7%), with limited fast food products (68.2%) and sweet and salty snacks (65.5%). They respected the recommended frequency of eating whole meal cereal (68.1%) and milk products (59.1%), and ingested a balanced diet (68.1%). About half of the grammar school students limited animal fats (50.9%), consuming vegetable fats almost every day (53.6%). Other recommendations were implemented less frequently. Statistical analysis confirmed that the girls ate significantly more fruits and vegetables 3–5 times a day (48% vs 25%; $p < 0.001$) and vegetables (56% vs 30%; $p < 0.001$) and dairy products at least 2 times a day (68% vs. 51.7%, $p < 0.05$). They also more frequently limited the intake of animal fats (64% vs 40%; $p < 0.001$), avoided carbonated beverages (52% vs 16.7%; $p < 0.0001$) and applied a balanced diet (72% vs 53.3%, $p < 0.01$). The boys ate meals significantly more regularly (56.7% vs 36%; $p < 0.01$), hydrated properly during exercise (73.3% vs 52%; $p < 0.01$) and they preferred water and other unsweetened beverages (80% vs 64%, $p < 0.01$).

Conclusions. Studies have shown insufficient implementation of quality nutritional recommendations for athletes and differentiation of certain dietary behaviors in relation to sex in a group of Cracow grammar school students practicing sports.

Keywords: youth, sportspeople, nutritional behaviors.