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Dietary habits, practices and knowledge among young athletes in the United Arab Emirates

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An appropriate diet is crucial for athletes. An insufficient nutrient intake can lead to health disorders. To describe the nutritional knowledge, nutritional practices and dietary habits for athletic individual in the United Arab Emirates cross-sectional study was conducted. 59 male soccer players 13 to 18 years were recruited from Al Jazira Academic sports clubs. Nutrition knowledge, practices and habits was evaluated by questionnaire, different components of the nutritional status and socio-demographic data were collected. Both questionnaires were administered in groups under the supervision of a trained interviewer. The software SPSS version 23 was used. Food frequency consumption separated the frequency of consumption of different food per week. Food were separated into the six main food groups: Cereals (14.11 ± 4.56), dairy (10.00 ± 3.32), meat, fish (5.93 ± 2.28), fruits and vegetables (11.11 ± 4.55), snack (7.91 ± 3.23) beverages (8.25 ± 2.55). The significant relationship was found between mothers education level and milk group (p -value < 0.01), snack group and weight (kg) (p value < 0.03) and athletes consumed snack group and skin fold sub-scapular (p value = 0.04). Knowledge score was (80.73 ± 8.81), score for self-efficiency (18.88 ± 3.66) and attitude (21.30 ± 1.88). The majority of the adolescent Soccer players considered in this study fell into the normal weight category and all are of a normal height according to the anthropometric data. The implication of this finding is that the athletes are considered to have an excess of body fat stores and less skin fold then it is desirable. A quite good dietary knowledge but limited healthy dietary practices and ability to change were observed, also a significant influence of the family environment.

Biography

Seham M AlRaish is currently pursuing PhD at the United Arab Emirates University after completing her Master's degree in Environmental Science. She has published two posters in reputed conference.

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