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12.25 Workshop B: Development of Eating Habits

OP7: THE ROLE OF CRAVING FOR ABNORMAL EATING AND ADDICTION IN OBESE CHILDREN

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Objectives. There is controversy about the role of craving and addiction in obesity (Ellis et al 1992, Pudel & Westenhöfer 1998). In adults we have shown that BMI groups differ significantly in craving/addiction with respect to food and that craving/addiction is a strong predictor of weight loss after surgical and behavioral interventions (Ardelt-Gattinger et al., 2000). Here we attempt to replicate this in children.

Method: In a cross sectional study (CS) we surveyed 4428 10-16-year old pupils from a representative selection of Austrian schools. We included 66 (Out1) and 79 (Out2) 10-14 year olds in interdisciplinary obesity group training of 2 year duration. Finally we observed 53 obese participants (age 10-14) of a three week weight-loss camp (CAMP). We used the child version of the food related craving/addiction questionnaire (FUN-KJ, Ardel-Gattinger & Moorehead, 2009) and measured weight and height (longitudinally pre/post).

Results. The craving/addiction score (CAS) differed significantly $F_{(8/4428)} = 41.85, p < 0.01; \eta^2 = 0.07$) between BMI-groups in the CS. Patients with declining sdsBMI had significantly ($F_{(1,66)} = 6.52, p < 0.05$ Out1) and trend (2.36, $p < 0.10$ Out2) lower baseline CAS and post treatment CAS ($F_{(1/79)} = 3.53, p < 0.01$ Out2). For the patients in CAMP CAS was the strongest predictor of weight loss (Beta=0.503, $t = -2.25, p = 0.036$).

Conclusion: These results prove the relevance of food craving/addiction in childhood obesity.

Key words: Obesity, Craving, Addiction, Children, Predictors