

Junk food-induced obesity- a growing threat to youngsters during the pandemic

Abstract

Introduction: Obesity has been declared an epidemic that does not discriminate based on age, gender, or ethnicity and thus needs urgent containment and management. Since the third wave of COVID-19 is expected to affect children the most, these children and adolescents should be more cautious while having junk foods, during covid situations due to the compromise of Immunity in the individuals and further exacerbating the organ damage.

Methodology: A PAN India survey organized by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) among 13,274 children between the ages 9–14 years reported that 93% of the children ate packed food and 68% consumed packaged sweetened beverages more than once a week, and 53% ate these products at least once in a day. Almost 25% of the School going children take ultra-processed food with high levels of sugar, salt, fat, such as pizza and burgers, from fast food outlets more than once a week. Children and adolescents who consume more junk food or addicted to such consumption might be even more vulnerable during the third wave, which will significantly affect the younger category.

Conclusion: There is an urgent need to spread awareness among children and young adults about these adverse effects of junk food. There is no better time than now to build a supportive environment nurturing children and young adults in society and promising good health.