

# Prevalence of excess weight in adolescents at primary health care units in South Brazil.

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## BACKGROUND

In the past decades Brazil has experienced a nutritional transition process characterized by a significant reduction in malnutrition and progressive increase in overweight and obesity. Nutritional education and precocious interventions are useful strategies to combat excess weight in childhood and adolescence. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), there were more than 40 million children overweight in the world in 2011. In Brazil, the prevalence of excess weight in the population aged 10-19 years was 21.7% in boys and 19.4% in girls in 2008-2009.

## OBJECTIVE

To estimate the prevalence of overweight and obesity in adolescents at primary care units (ESFs) in order to identify those eligible for weight control programs.

## METHODS

Quantitative cross-sectional study in adolescents (10-19 year) who lived in the geographical area of four ESFs in the Brazilian Public Health System (SUS) in Blumenau-SC. All adolescents were called to assess weight, height and body mass index (BMI). It was excluded those who did not attend the call and those who were pregnant. Overweight and obesity was defined by WHO criteria (BMI for age and gender). Epiinfo2000 and Epidata were used in statistical analysis. The Human Ethnic Comity of the Blumenau University approved the study.

## RESULTS

There were 1351 adolescents in the geographical area covered by the study. A total of 840 adolescents were evaluated. Excess weight was observed in 26.8% (n=225). Overweight in 14.8% (n=124) and obesity in 12.0% (n=101). Almost 100% of them were not involved in health care programs to weight control. There were no differences in the prevalence of excess weight between age groups 10-14 and 15-19 years (27.1% vs 26.3% respectively; chi-squared  $p > 0.05$ ) and gender (male 52.8%; female 47.2%; chi-squared  $p > 0.05$ ). There was difference in excess weight between two ESFs (24.8% vs 35,9%; qui-squared 4.1,  $p = 0.04$ ) (Figure 1).

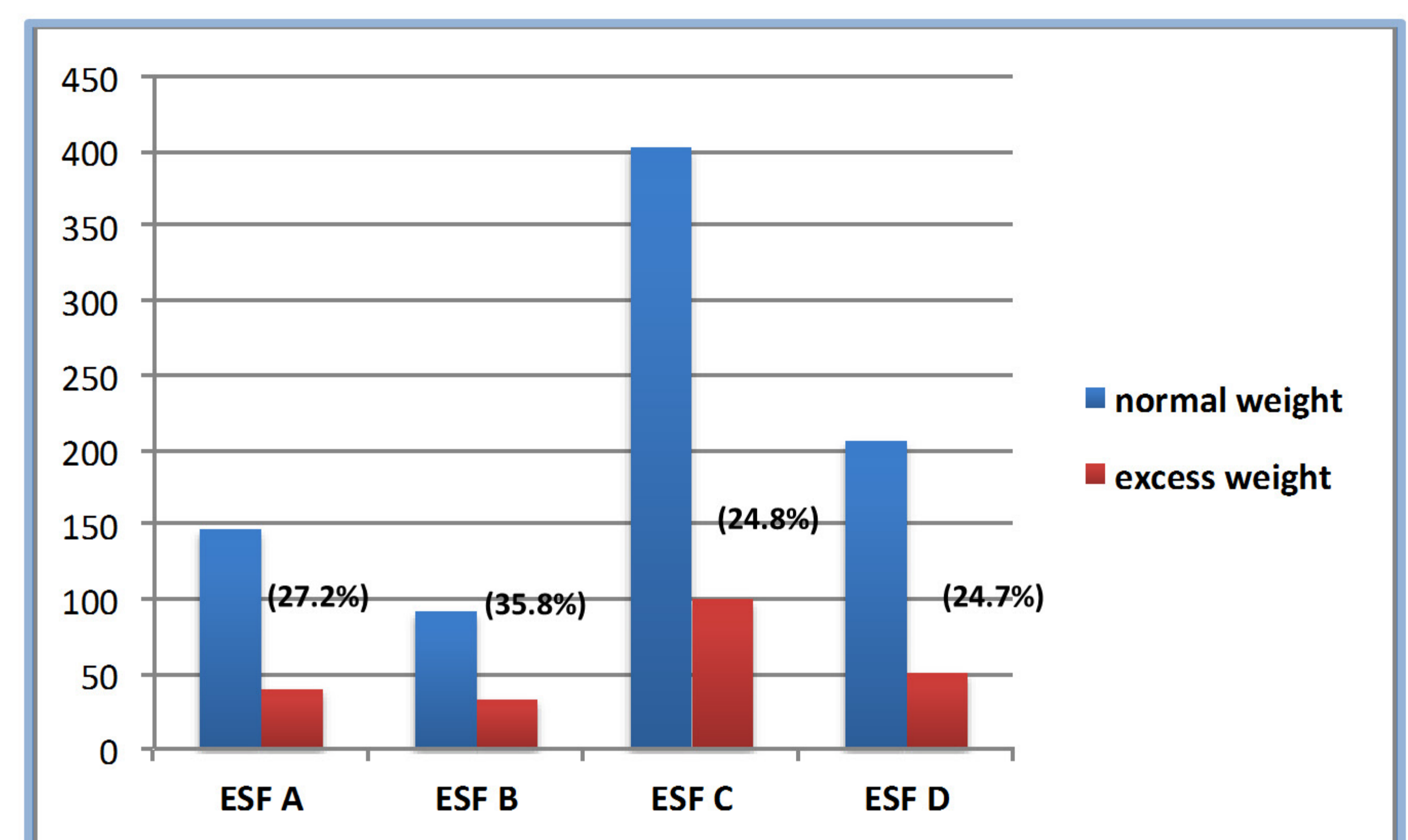


Figure 1 – Weight categories distribution according geographical area.  
OBS: Frequencies was calculated considering the total amount of adolescents per geographical area .

## CONCLUSION

The prevalence of excess weight in adolescents in a South Brazil city was 26.8%. The majority of them were not involved in programs to weight control. Differences in geographical distribution of excess weight were observed.

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