Abstract

Objective. To describe the prevalence of abnormal eating behaviors in a population-based nationwide survey. Material and Methods. A stratified, probabilistic, multistage design sampling process was used. The Brief Questionnaire for Risky Eating Behaviors was included in the Mexican Health and Nutrition Survey 2006 (ENSANUT 2006) and administered to participants 10-19 years old (n= 25 166). The study had the power to describe nationwide characteristics by age, regions and urban/rural settings. Results. A high risk for having an eating disorder was found in 0.8% of the total participants (0.4% male adolescents and 1.0% female). Inhabitants in large cities showed higher risk for having an abnormal eating behavior compared to subjects living in other settings. The highest prevalences were found in males > 15 years old and females > 13 years old for all evaluated behaviors. Conclusions. Results show less prevalence of risky eating behaviors among adolescents in comparison to other populations. The female/male ratio was 3:1, far different from the 9:1 shown in a previous study in Mexico City, but similar to results from the US national eating disorders screening.

Keywords
Adolescents, eating, eating disorders, national surveys, Mexico.