Background: There are scarce data about the efficacy and security of meal replacement products as a strategy to weight loss. Aim: To evaluate the efficacy and safety of a weight loss program that includes meal replacement products. Methods: We evaluated the effect of a hypocaloric diet versus a hypocaloric diet that includes meal replacement products in 55 overweight or type I obese patients. Patients were distributed to a control group (hypocaloric diet) or an intervention group (hypocaloric diet with meal replacement products) during 8 weeks. We registered anthropometric data, smoke habit and level of physical activity. We also studied biochemical parameters at the beginning of the study, at 4th week of the study and at the end of the same. Results: The control group lost 3.97 kg, while in the intervention group we observed a loss of 4.44 kg. These differences were not statistically significant between groups. Other anthropometric parameters as waist and hip perimeters diminished also in both groups, without differences between them. We observed also a statistically significant decrease (p = 0.041) in the values of triglycerides, without differences between groups again. Discussion: Meal replacement products were as effective and safe to lose weight and to modify other anthropometric parameters in a controlled dietetic program as a conventional dietetic treatment without meal replacement products.

Keywords
Obesity, Meal replacement, Weight loss, Hypocaloric diet.