Abstract

Introduction: Television viewing is considered to be a risk factor for overweight in children because of its association with reduced physical activity and increased calorie intake. Objective: The aim of the present study is to examine whether eating styles affect the relationship between television viewing (TV-viewing) and snacking. Method: In a sample of 962 pre-adolescents, self-reported television viewing and snacking were assessed in relation to dietary restraint, external eating and emotional eating, as measured with the child version of the Dutch Eating Behavior Questionnaire. With regression analyses we assessed the possible moderating role of emotional, external and restrained eating on the relation between TV-viewing and snacking. In all analyses we controlled for age, sex, BMI and the possible confounding effects of the other eating styles. Results: Emotional eating, and not dietary restraint or external eating, moderated the relationship between TV-viewing and snacking. Conclusion: TV-viewing seems to be more strongly related to snacking in children with higher levels of emotional eating. TV-viewing may also be a risk factor for the development of emotional eating.

Keywords