Abstract
The relation between body mass index and prevalence of asthma symptoms in adults. Objective: To evaluate the relation between body mass index and prevalence of asthma symptoms in adults. Setting: Centro Educativo Latinoamericano University. Rosario. Argentina. Population: 311 students, 86.1% women, aged 18 and 30. Method: Samples were obtained using the ISAAC as well as weight, height, reflux and physical activity questionnaires. The statistical analysis was performed with EPI INFO. Results: Students mean body mass index (BMI) was 20.83 kg/m² for women and 24.02 kg/m² for men (p<0.01). While 53.9% reported having symptoms of asthma or rhinitis, only 18.7% had presented wheezing and 40.2% nasal symptoms over the last 12 months. There was evidence of reflux symptoms among 43.5% of students. Only 52.3% exercised regularly twice or three times a week. Students with wheezing or nasal symptoms showed a higher BMI than the control group (21.6 vs. 20.8 kg/m², p<0.05). The subjects with wheezing over the past year had presented a higher BMI than those without wheezing (22.4 vs. 21.0 kg/m², p<0.05). The students with overweight (IMC>27 kg/m²) showed, at present, a significantly higher wheezing symptoms prevalence (OR: 3.53; IC95% 1.04 11.84; p<0.05) while the underweight students (IMC<19 kg/m²) showed a significantly lower prevalence of wheezing symptoms (OR: 0.45; IC95% 0.25 0.95; p<0.05). Statistical analysis showed that reflux, sex, presence of nasal symptoms and physical activity might not be confounding factors. Conclusion: This data suggest that in young adults, selected by education and economic level, there is a significant relation between overweight and wheezing

Keywords
obesity asthma rhinitis adults body mass index reflux exercise