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Obesity and diastolic function of the left ventricle by echocardiography in a Mediterranean child population

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Background: The prevalence of overweight in childhood is 26% and obesity is 12.6% in Spain. Diastolic function assessed with echocardiography shows significant worsening in obese adults compared to non-obese adults. However, few studies describe the association between obesity and diastolic function in the pediatric population.

Aim: To investigate the relationship between obesity and diastolic function in a Mediterranean pediatric population.

Methods: A random sample of children and adolescents of primary and secondary education was selected, stratifying by age, gender and educational centers in a rural town of 2864 inhabitants of southern Spain. Children between 6 and 17 years old were included. A transthoracic echocardiogram was performed to evaluate diastolic function.

Results: A total of 212 children were studied (10.9 ± 3.0 years old and 51.9% males): 163 (76.9%) were not obese and 49 (23.1%) were obese. Age and sex were similar in both groups. Results are shown in the table. Obesity was related to a larger left atrial volume, a higher Awave velocity, a lower lateral e "wave velocity, a higher average E/e ratio, and a higher pressure gradient between the atrium and the right ventricle.

Conclusions: Obesity in childhood is associated to worsening of diastolic function parameters commonly measured in echocardiography.

Obese Vs non-Obese

	non-obese	obese	р
Age	$10,8 \pm 3,0$	$11,0 \pm 2,8$	0,63
Male (%)	50,1%	57,1%	0,4
A-wave velocity (cm/s)	$58,7 \pm 13,1$	$64,8 \pm 13,8$	0,005
E/A	$1,89 \pm 0,45$	$1,75 \pm 0,41$	0,05
lateral e" velocity (cm/s)	$21,26 \pm 4,61$	$19,58 \pm 3,97$	0,02
average E/e"	$6,4 \pm 1,1$	$7,0 \pm 1,2$	0,001
left atrial volume (mL)	$20,8 \pm 6,8$	$27,9 \pm 7,4$	<0,0005
pressure gradient (mmHg)	$15,5 \pm 4,5$	18,0 ± 4,9	0,02