

Tobacco and alcohol use in adolescents and young athletes: Differences between genders

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: Adolescence is a time when children and young are susceptible to factors that influence the adoption of health-related behaviors^[1]. The use of substances, such as tobacco and alcohol is potentially associated with other risk behaviors^[2] extremely aggressive for teens^[3] and may endanger health and have serious consequences in adulthood. **OBJECTIVES:** The present study aims: (i) to identify the prevalence of tobacco and alcohol use - considering the profile of regular consumption, use or consumption, at least one day or more in the last 30 days, and (ii) to analyse the relationship between alcohol and tobacco consumption; in adolescents and young athletes, of both genders. **METHODS:** A total of 2144 subjects of both sexes, aged between 12 and 17 years, participants in the Youth Games of Paraná, Brazil, were studied. Sociodemographic indicators and risk behaviours associated with health (Youth Risk Behavior Survey Questionnaire) were collected. The one-off prevalences and respective confidence intervals ($\alpha = 0.05$) were stratified according to gender and modality. To identify the differences between the strata, we used the chi-square test (χ^2). The significance level was set at $p \leq 0.05$. **RESULTS:** The prevalence of experimental tobacco use among boys (33,8%) and among girls (24,9%) shows significant differences regarding genders ($\chi^2 = 19.66$, $p = 0.001$). There were no significant differences between the boys (75.2%) and among the girls (74.7%). It should be noted that there were important differences between the genders regarding binge drinking among the athletes [33.5% ♂ versus 28.6% ♀ ($\chi^2 = 6,294$, $p = 0,001$)]. The age range, in both genders, for the initial uses and experimentation of tobacco and alcohol was comprised between 13-15 years. Among the sixteen sports modalities studied, we observed the experimental use of tobacco and alcohol in all of them. The most prevalent mode of use of tobacco was Cycling (43.5%), and the modality that presented higher prevalence of alcohol consumption was Handball (84.2%). **CONCLUSIONS:** Males have a higher prevalence of alcohol and tobacco use. There are only differences regarding gender, relative to the experimental use of tobacco. The prevalence of tobacco and alcohol consumption is very similar to the values found in the same age, Brazilian non-athletes. In very ten young athletes,

three presented experimental tobacco use and eight, experimental alcohol consumption. We think, it is fundamental to implement intervention programs in young athletes' focused on information, prevention and control of the tobacco and alcohol use.

Keywords: *adolescent, ethyl alcohol, tobacco, additive behavior*

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