

Factors Associated with Soda consumption among high school students in American Samoa

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ABSTRACT

American Samoa continues to experience a high burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including overweight and obesity (OWOB) and type 2 diabetes. Risk for these diseases starts in early childhood and directly impacts adult health outcomes, making adolescent nutrition a critical public health concern. High consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs), particularly soda, is a primary driver of NCD rates in the South Pacific region; however, limited research has examined the factors associated with soda consumption among high school students in American Samoa. This project utilized an existing survey of adolescent metabolic health among 486 students (ages 11-19) from seven high schools across the territory's main island to evaluate the relationship between various demographic and socioeconomic factors and SSB intake. Variables analyzed included high school, grade level, gender, subjective family income rank, and monthly soda consumption frequency. Descriptive statistics, pivot table distributions, and correlation coefficients were used to examine differences across sub-groups. We hypothesized that male gender, lower perceived family income, and upperclassmen status would correlate with higher monthly soda consumption frequencies. While data analysis is ongoing, results are expected to reveal key disparities in soda consumption across different settings, grade levels, and socioeconomic tiers. These findings may also help identify which adolescent sub-populations are at the highest risk for heavy SSB consumption. Ultimately, this research could help direct how dietary interventions and wellness policies can be most effectively targeted to specific school environments. Addressing adolescent soda consumption habits provides a valuable opportunity to support long-term metabolic health outcomes in American Samoa.

KEYWORDS

Soda consumption, Adolescents, Overweight/Obesity, Metabolic health in American Samoa,

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