On the positive association between candy and fruit gum consumption and hyperactivity in children and adolescents with ADHD

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Abstract

OBJECTIVE:
The purpose of the present study was the analysis of the association between consumption of candy and fruit gums, diagnosis of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and behavioural problems.

METHODS:
In total, 1,187 children and adolescents of the German Health Interview and Examination Survey for Children and Adolescents (KiGGS) were analyzed.

RESULTS:
It was observed that children and adolescents with ADHD as compared to healthy controls (HC) reported to consume more frequently and higher amounts of candy and fruit gums and that hyperactivity was associated with frequent candy and fruit gum consumption.

CONCLUSIONS:
Because with the present design no conclusions on causality or directionality of the found associations could be drawn, results are discussed quite broadly in the light of several previously published interpretations, also to serve as a generator for further research. One more innovative speculation is that children and adolescents with ADHD may consume more frequently candy and fruit gums in order i) to compensate for their higher needs of energy resulting from hyperactive behaviour and/or ii) to compensate for the ADHD-typical deficits in the "reward cascade".