

Lifestyle-related beliefs of young Latin-Americans (pp. 19-36)

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This article presents the lifestyle-related beliefs of young Latin-Americans, in particular Colombian university students. It is based on a non-experimental, descriptive and cross-sectional study. A description is made of the health-related beliefs of 754 youths regarding six different lifestyle variables: condition, physical and sporting activity, recreation and use of free time, self-care and medical care, eating habits, the consumption of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, and sleep. For this purpose, the Lifestyle-related questionnaire on practices and beliefs, and a Lifestyle-related survey on environmental factors were applied. A high presence of beliefs favorable to health was found in all the variables measured, except in sleep. Results are discussed in the light of the Health beliefs model (Hochman, 1958, Rosenstock, 1990), the Theory of reasoned action (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1980) and the Adoption of precautions model (Weinstein, 1998). Finally, it is highlighted that we need to design programs which are aimed at the promotion of healthy lifestyles among youths, taking into account various psycho-social processes such as learning, cognition, motivation and emotion