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| **Food advertisement and child obesity: a complex problem for health promotion** |
| **Background/Objectives:** Child obesity is a pandemic health problem with multifactorial etiology, that reflects the life style changes in the past decades, principally in children’s eating habits and levels of sedentarism. Food advertisement and its influence on food choices have been subject of frequent discussions, especially in the context of childhood, since children are known to be more vulnerable to advertisement. This integrative literature review was conducted to study the database literature on the relationship between food advertisement and child obesity. **Methods:** Integrative literature review, searching *PubMed* and *Scielo* databases for studies published in the last five years, in English, Spanish or Portuguese languages, using the search terms: “food advertisement to children” and “child obesity”. The database search found 1,200 studies to be potentially included in this review. After careful reading, papers that did not contemplate this study’s objectives were excluded and 45 studies were included in this review.**Results:** Food is the most frequent type of product advertised in television, and many ads are directed to children’s audience, advertising mainly foods containing high calories, high levels of sugar, sodium and fat, and low levels of proteins and fibers, especially fast foods and candy. Most ads use bright colors, slogans, songs, cartoon characters, games and/or gifts to enchant children and more than half food ads directed to children present false health claims. Although there is no hard evidence that food advertisement directly harms children’s health, undoubtfully it negatively influences eating habits and is considered among the factors that can lead to child obesity. The World Health Organization recommends the reduction of children's exposure to food advertising since 2010 and an international policy of food advertising self-regulation was implemented recently, but studies showed that the regulation of food advertising to children has not been sufficient to protect this vulnerable public.  **Discussion:** Childhood obesity is associated with children's over-exposure to unhealthy food advertising directed at them. Health promoting measures to children must include policies to regulate food advertising, particularly those aimed at vulnerable public of children.**Keywords:** Child obesity; Food advertisement; Food advertisement policies; Health Promotion. |