

Socioeconomic correlates of free sugar consumption in early childhood

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Background

- The decline in children's caries experience during the last three decades is not universal, with larger reductions in high-income countries (1, 2).
- In Colombia: the last oral health survey showed a worrying increase in caries experience among 5-year old children, going from 60.4% in 1993 to 62.1% in 2014 (3).
- The consumption of free sugars is directly associated with dental caries in early childhood. Infant foods make a substantial contribution to free sugars intake (4).
- More evidence is needed on free sugars intake in early childhood and its socioeconomic correlates.

Objective

To assess the association between free sugar intake during early childhood and different dimensions of socioeconomic position (SEP) in Colombia. We also assessed the association between free sugar intake and caries.



Source: <https://www.guiadelnino.com/8-preguntas-frecuentes-sobre-la-leche-de-fórmula>

Methods

- Data:** The latest Colombian oral health survey (2014).
- Sample:** 6,446 children aged 1, 3 and 5 years.
- Free sugar intake:** Child had ever been bottle-fed and content of the bottle -including sugary content (sugary or fizzy drinks).
- SEP:** Household income, area-level SEP, overcrowding, report of the family having ran out of money for food (last 30 days).
- Statistical analysis:**
 - Multiple logistic regression models: to assess associations between sugary content in the bottle and SEP (adjusted by age, gender, region, urban/rural residence and ethnicity).
 - Similar models: to determine the association between sugary content in the bottle and untreated decay, including whether children had slept with a bottle containing sugar.

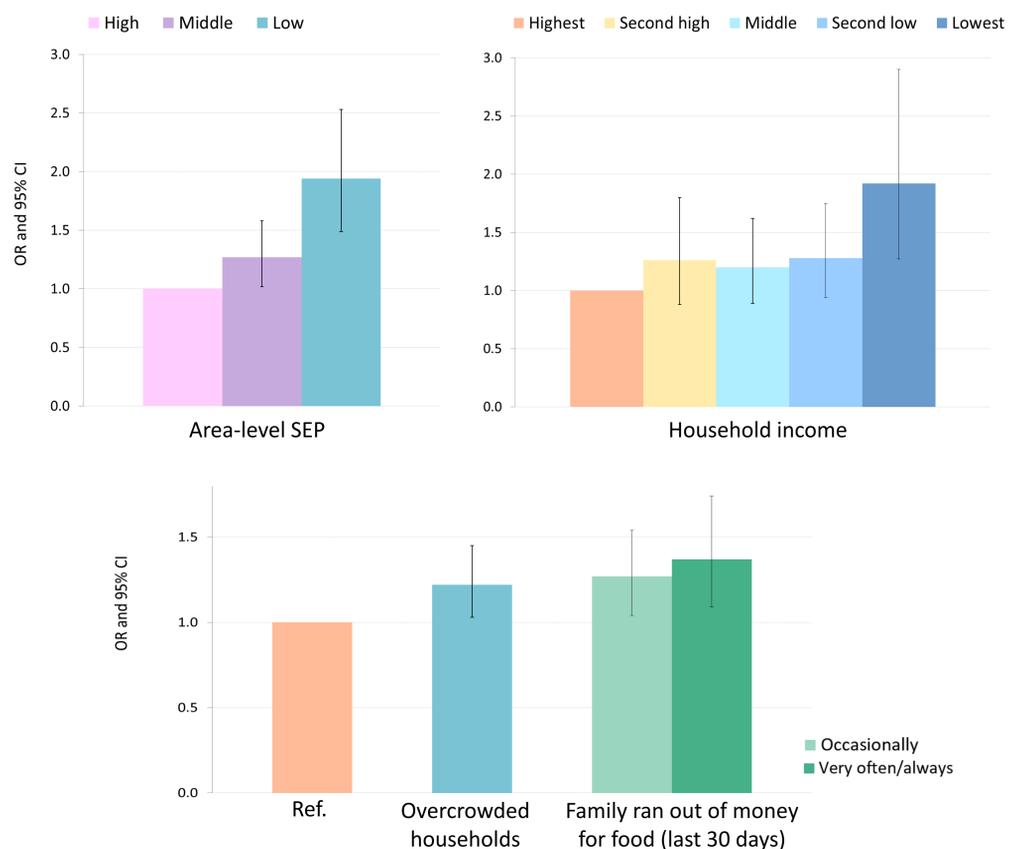
Results

Overall, 71% of the children were bottle-fed (n=4,566).

Among them, 3,361 (73.6%) had sugary drinks in the bottle.



Source: <http://theconversation.com/> Some infant formula milks contain more sugar than soda drinks



Associations between sugary content in the bottle (sugary or fizzy drinks) and SEP

Children who had slept with a bottle containing sugar were more likely to have untreated decay, both cavitated (OR=1.75, 95%CI: 1.36, 2.25) and ICDAS-merged initial-to-severe lesions (OR=1.52, 95%CI: 1.16, 1.98).

Conclusions

Socioeconomic inequalities in free sugar consumption start very early in life. **Free sugar consumption in early childhood is an inequality issue.**

References

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