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Energy drinks consumption in Italian adolescents: preliminary data of social, psychological and behavioral features.

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Author information

Abstract

BACKGROUND: To investigate the prevalence of energy drink (ED) consumption and the associations with social, psychological and behavioral features among an Italian adolescent sample.

METHODS: A cross-sectional prevalence study of 450 Italian adolescents attending middle school was conducted. The Italian versions of the European Food Safety Authority's adolescent Energy Drinks Questionnaire and of the Depression and Anxiety in Youth Scale (DAYS) were administered to evaluate ED use and its psychological correlates. Odds ratios (OR) with 95% confidence intervals (CI) were calculated using a logistic model to estimate the associations between ED consumption and socio-demographic characteristics, psychological factors and risky behaviors.

RESULTS: The prevalence of ED consumers was 57%, of whom 49% used alcohol mixed with ED. A total of 9% exhibited high chronic consumption, 31% average chronic consumption and 8% high acute consumption. Males were significantly more likely to use ED (OR:2.7, 95%CI: 1.8-4.0, p=0.00) and to engage in high acute consumption (OR:4.0, 95%CI: 1.1-13.8, p=0.03). Regular smoking was associated with ED use (OR:3.4, 95%CI: 1.2-9.1, p=0.02). No relationship was observed between ED use and depression (OR:1.6, 95%CI: 0.9-3.0, p=0.10) and anxiety (OR:0.8, 95%CI: 0.5-1.4, p=0.44), although those who were depressed with a suggestive but not statistically significant increased risk of acute ED use (OR: 2.7, 95%CI: 1.0-7.4, p=0.06).

CONCLUSIONS: The prevalence of ED consumption among middle school Italian students was high and it was associated with another risky behavior, smoking, but not with anxiety or depression. About half of ED consumers used alcohol mixed with ED.

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