

**NUTRITIONAL BEHAVIORS OF A GROUP OF BOYS AGED 10–13 PRACTICING BASKETBALL, DEPENDING ON THEIR MOTHERS EDUCATION LEVEL****Maria GACEK<sup>1</sup>, Adam POPEK<sup>2</sup>**<sup>1</sup>*Department of Sports Medicine and Human Nutrition,*<sup>2</sup>*Ph. D. level studies,**University of Physical Education in Cracow, Cracow, Poland,**e-mail: sport1326@wp.pl*

**Introduction.** A high nutritional density diet facilitates the optimization of development processes and functional capacity of children and young people engaged in sports. Nutritional habits of children and young people are formed in a family environment.

**Objective.** Evaluating the frequency of consumption of selected product groups in a group of boys aged 10–13 years, practicing basketball, depending on the level of education of their mothers.

**Material and methods.** The study was conducted in a group of 108 boys aged 10–13 years, practicing basketball. The mothers of those boys completed education levels: university (75%) and high-school (25%). An authorial, validated questionnaire of frequency of consumption of groups of products was utilized, with the following scale: every day, several times a week, once a week, once a month, rarely and never. For the purposes of statistical analysis, the Mann-Whitney U test was used, with the PQStat v. 1.6.0.428 program.

**Results.** The boys practicing basketball usually consumed vegetables and fruits every day or almost every day. As regards cereal products, they mostly consumed white and whole wheat bread (averagely several times a week), less commonly oatmeal and sweetened cornflakes (averagely once a week). Milk and/or cheeses were chosen a couple of times a week, as were dairy fermented products, natural and sweetened. Among other protein products, the most commonly chosen (on average several times a week), were pork and poultry meat and cold meats and less often fish (averagely once a month). Eggs and nuts were consumed once a week on average. Among products not recommended, the boys usually ate sweets and confectionery (every week) and, less frequently, fast food products (once a month). As regards drinks, they most often chose bottled water (daily), less often sweetened soft drinks (once a week), and the least often – energy drinks. Statistical analysis showed that boys whose mothers had higher education, were significantly more likely to eat vegetables ( $p < 0.05$ ), fruit ( $p < 0.05$ ), pork ( $p < 0.05$ ) and drink bottled water ( $p < 0, 0001$ ).

**Conclusions.** Irregularities have been shown in the diet of boys aged 9–13 years old, practicing basketball, with a tendency to adopt more sustainable food choices in boys whose mothers possessed higher education.

**Keywords:** young athletes, nutritional behaviors, level of education of mothers, basketball.