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Eating Habits and Associated Factors Among Adolescent Students in Jordan

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Abstract: The study aimed to assess adolescent patterns of eating habits, determine factors influencing these patterns, and identify male and female differences related to eating habits. Using a cross-sectional study approach, a sample of adolescents (N = 423) in randomly selected clusters chosen from government and private schools in the south of Jordan completed self-administered questionnaires relating to socio-demographic data and personal eating habits. Results showed that parents, peers, and mass media are contributing factors, with peer pressure likely outweighing parental guidance. Males were more likely to be influenced by peers than females, whereas females were more likely to be influenced by media-based advertising. Lower body mass indices correlate with eating breakfast, which a majority of adolescents reported they do not do. Interventions targeted toward improving eating and active behaviors should involve peers as well as parents.