

DURATION OF BREASTFEEDING AND ITS RELATION TO ULTRA-PROCESSED PRODUCTS AND SWEETENED BEVERAGES INTAKE IN URUGUAYAN CHILDREN UNDER FOUR YEARS. *(aceptado para el Congreso del American Nutrition Society Congress)*

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ABSTRACT

Objective: Longer duration of breastfeeding seems to be associated with healthier eating habits in children. The aim of this study was to determine the association between the duration of breastfeeding, and the consumption of ultra-processed products and sweetened beverages, in Uruguayan children under 4 years of age.

Methods: Data used in this descriptive study were obtained in the First National Survey of Child Health, Nutrition and Development of Uruguay (ENDIS), including children under 4 years (n=3077) recruited in 2013. The interviewed adult was asked about breastfeeding duration and type, as well as the child's eating habits through a qualitative survey. Breastfeeding duration was classified as: never, < 6 months and \geq 6 months; and foods as ultra-processed products and sweetened beverages. Children were grouped by age (<24 and \geq 24 months). Adjusted regression models were tested to evaluate the association of breastfeeding duration with children's intake (yes or no) of ultra-processed and sweetened products, adjusted for maternal age, maternal body mass index and food security (yes or no). Statistical analysis was done with SPSS Statistics version 25.

Results:

Prevalence of breastfeeding duration was 44%, 43% and 13% for \geq 6 month, < 6 months and never breastfed, respectively. A quarter of all children consumed habitually sweetened beverages and more than 80% ultra-processed products. Children < 6 months did not consume ultra-processed products or sweetened beverages. Therefore,

these children were not further analyzed. In children aged 6-23 months there were no associations between breastfeeding duration and consumption of the tested foods ($p>0.19$). In children aged 24-47 months, breastfeeding duration ≥ 6 months was associated with lower odds of consuming sweetened beverages (OR: 0.62, CI 95%: 0.39-0.98, $p=0.040$), and this association remained after covariates adjustment (OR: 0.57, CI 95%: 0.36-0.92, $p=0.022$). No associations were found between breastfeeding duration and consumption of ultra-processed products in the older children.

Conclusions:

Longer breastfeeding duration was associated with a reduced consumption of sweetened beverages, in children between 24 months and four years. No association was found with ultra-processed products.