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ONLINE ISSN : 1880-3997

PRINT ISSN : 0917-2394

Pediatric Dental Journal

Vol. 16 (2006) , No. 1 pp.17-22

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Changes in the mouthful weights of familiar foods with age of five years, eight years and adults

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(Received on September 2, 2005)

(Accepted on December 26, 2005)

Abstract For effective mastication and swallowing, to take optimum mouthful food regularly is necessary. The purpose of this study is to compare the weights and the variance of a mouthful food between children and adults. We studied mouthful weight and the coefficient variation in 5-year-old children (n = 10), 8-year-old children (n = 10) and adults (n = 10) while they were eating rice, bread, sausage and apple on two different days. The test foods were served in random order 2-4 hours after lunch. Each portion was weighed before and after each bite to measure the mouthful weight, and the weight of the last bite of each portion was eliminated from the data. The mean weight and coefficient variation in each subject were calculated. The results showed the mean weight was largest in the adults, intermediate in the 8-year-old children, and smallest in the 5-year-old children for all test foods (ANOVA). Moreover, the mean coefficient variation among the weights of the groups revealed that mouthful weight within an individual varied most widely in the 5-year-old children and most narrowly in the adults, and that 8-year-old children could show the same coefficient variation of mouthful weight as adults in rice and apple (Steel-Dwass test). Our results suggest that mouthful weight becomes larger and more regularly with age.

Key words Children, Feeding behavior, Growth, Mouthful weight

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To cite this article:

Kazuko Yagi, Junko Matsuyama, Tomoe Mitomi, Yo Taguchi and Tadashi Noda: Changes in the mouthful weights of familiar foods with age of five years, eight years and adults . *Ped Dent J* **16**: 17-22, 2006 .

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