

## Editorial

We are glad to present such special issue of the Archivos Latinoamericanos de Nutrición, developed in the context of the Executive Programmes of Scientific and Technological Cooperation between Italy-Argentina (2011-2013, extended until 2017) and Italy-Mexico (2011-2013), under joint support of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the MINCYT (Ministerio de Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación Productiva, Argentina) and the CONACYT (Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología, Mexico).

Such bilateral research projects, focused on nutrition-related diseases' surveillance and prevention, were led by Prof. Dario Gregori (University of Padova, Italy) and Prof. Hugo Rodriguez (Garrahan Hospital, Buenos Aires, Argentina) (Italy-Argentina Cooperation), and by Prof. Francesco Giunta (University of Pisa, Italy) and Prof. Javier Dibildox (University San Luis Potosí, San Luis Potosí, Mexico) (Italy-Mexico Cooperation). These projects were aimed at analyzing epidemiological and preventive aspects of a multi-factorial phenomenon that represents a severe burden from the public health perspective: the relationship between nutrition and non-communicable diseases (referring particularly to obesity).

Obesity is well-known to be a concerning epidemic worldwide, both in developed and newly industrialized countries (NIC), and several efforts have been made to understand heterogeneous factors affecting its onset. In recent years, several researches have focused on the contribution of non-traditional factors to obesity. However, no definitive evidence is available in this field, in particular when moving apart from the North-American or Western-European experiences.

This special issue is aimed at serving as a collector for research experiences coming from outside of those regions. Investigations include researches on the role of both traditional (eating habits) and non-traditional factors (concentrating particularly on brand awareness, exposure to TV advertising, marketing of gadgets with toys) in affecting the adoption of unhealthy lifestyles, resulting in increased non-communicable diseases' risk in subjects from both developed and emerging economies. Together with the analysis of such predictors, which is essential to develop *ad hoc* public health interventions fighting obesity and other nutrition-related diseases, the impact of these public health policies, promoting healthy nutrition, has been investigated, analyzing if children's eating habits are compliant with current nutritional recommendations. Besides preventive aspects (and their efficacy), pure epidemiological investigations have been conducted, e.g.: analyzing the role of simple anthropometric measures in predicting body composition in children of different ethnicities. Finally, addictive behaviors connected to nutrition have been investigated, focusing on predictors of alcoholism in childhood.

As clearly seen from above, papers included in this special issue report from an intense bilateral cooperation between Italy and Latin America in an emerging field like nutrition and non-communicable diseases. In our view, this should contribute on promoting the development and the dissemination of researches in regions only partially covered by the general literature.

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