

ORIGINAL PAPER**The Effectiveness of Nutrition and Activity Programmes for Young Adults with Intellectual Disabilities****Medine Yilmaz, PhD, RN**

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Correspondence: Medine Yilmaz, Assist. Prof, Izmir Katip Celebi University, Health Sciences Faculty, Nursing Department, Izmir- Turkey **e-mail:** medine1974@hotmail.com**Abstract****Background:** Individuals with intellectual disabilities may have difficulties in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. One of the main health problems of individuals with intellectual disabilities is problems with nutrition and physical activity.**Objective** of this study was to examine the effectiveness of a healthy dietary regime and activity programme for young adults.**Methodology:**The study was conducted semi-experimentally on a single group (37 adults, had moderate intellectual disabilities and a BMI between 19.9 and 24.9.) in the form pre-test post-test. The subjects of the study were offered activity programmes and education on healthy eating for eight weeks. The Nutrition and Activity Knowledge Scale was used for data collection. The questionnaire was completed in face-to-face interviews with the individuals with intellectual disabilities.**Results:**The mean age of those to whom the Nutrition and Activity Knowledge Scale was applied was 26.91 ± 7.55 (min-max: 18-46). Females were 38.3% (n = 36) of the total, and males were 61.7% (n = 58). The Cronbach alpha value of the 15-item form of the scale was found to be .70. Thirty seven of the intellectually disabled individuals who took part in the experimental part of the study also attended the education sessions and filled in the pre and post-tests. Scores on the Nutrition and Activity Knowledge Scale increased significantly after the education sessions. No significant difference by sex was found in mean scores in the pre-test**Conclusions:** The results showed that knowledge scores increased significantly after education. Even though the sample was very small, the results of this study show the necessity of a special education programme for these individuals. Systematic education programmes can help these young adults to be less dependent in their choices of food. The Nutrition and Activity Scale can be used to test changes in knowledge levels in studies with a larger sample in the future.**Key Words:**Intellectual disabilities, nutrition, young adults, activity programmes