

**Epidemiology/Genetics Abstracts**

**Title:** PARENTING STYLES, ACTIVITY LEVELS AND FOOD CHOICES, A STUDY OF CHILDREN WITH SPINA BIFIDA IN THE MARITIMES

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**Background:** In recent years, clinicians in this Eastern Canadian Tertiary Health Centre have noted an increase in the rates of obesity amongst patients with Spina Bifida. Accompanying this apparent rise in obesity is an observed trend toward increased social isolation of young people with SB and their caregivers. This study was implemented in an attempt to uncover trends in the population of children who are obese. In so doing, resources may be directed at families with similar traits in an effort to prevent obesity in the future.

**Method:** Children (ages 5-19) and their primary caregiver attending the hospital's spina bifida clinic were approached by the study's research assistance. After informed consent was obtained, parents filled out the Parenting Practices Questionnaire (Robinson et al, 1995), Hay's Habitual Activity Estimation Scale (Hay, 1997) a 3-Day food Record and a demographic questionnaire. The primary caregiver completed the parenting questionnaire, demographic form and the activity measure while in clinic and returned them, sealed, to the research assistant. The 3-day food record was taken home and mailed back in a prepaid envelope. Raw data was collected and processed. Inferential statistics will be performed to determine relationships between variables.

**Results:** 25 families participated in the study overall. 44% were male, 54% female. 64% were myelomeningocele, 20% were lipomeningocele, 16% were other neural tube defects. Inferential statistics are in the process of being performed. Results will be ready in early fall 2008.

**Conclusion:** Conclusion will be drawn once data from inferential statistics becomes available in early fall 2008.