

TASMANIAN LONGITUDINAL GROWTH STUDY FROM BIRTH TO SEVEN YEARS OF AGE

JOHANNA F. COY*

The Tasmanian Growth Study (Coy, Gibson, Longmore and Ratkowsky 1976) which represents approximately one seventh of the total number of children in the age group, is conducted to obtain a better understanding of the growth patterns of Tasmanian infants and children and particularly to trace the natural history of obesity.

Differences in growth rates in babies have been reported in the last few decades. In the 1950's, doubling of weight by 5 months and trebling weight by one year was considered a suitable achievement in Australia. In that same period, 10% of the U.K. babies doubled their weight by three months, whereas in the 1970's more than 40% of the English babies double their weight by three months while trebling occurs by 6 to 7 months.

The report discussed whether it should be considered desirable to aim at doubling or trebling weight by a certain age.

Correlations between birth order and birth weight, and birth weight and the weights at the age of one, three and seven were examined. The importance of weight status at one year of age as an important indicator of weight at 3 and 7 years was demonstrated.

REFERENCE

COY, J.F., GIBSON, H.B., LONGMORE, E.A., and RATKOWSKY, D.A. (1976)
Med.J.Aust., 2: 566.

* Department of Health Services, Hobart, Tasmania.