

Dieting may cause weight gain in teenagers

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U.S. scientists say adolescents who diet to lose weight might significantly increase their odds of gaining weight.

University of Minnesota researchers analyzed the results of surveys conducted among teenagers from 1999 to 2004 to "understand the perplexing finding that has been reported in several longitudinal studies, whereby dieting predicts greater weight gain over time in adolescents."

According to information provided by more than 2,500 adolescents, dieting among girls predicted increased binge eating and decreased breakfast consumption, with a non-significant trend toward decreased fruit and vegetable intake.

Among boys, dieting predicted increased binge eating, decreased physical activity and a trend toward decreased breakfast consumption.

The behaviors were also associated with increases in body mass index, according to the researchers.

The University of Minnesota researchers, led by Professor Dianne Neumark-Sztainer, conclude dieting might lead to weight gain among adolescents, in part because of "the long-term adoption of behavioral patterns that are counterproductive to weight management."

The study is detailed in the March issue of the Journal of the American Dietetic Association.

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