Strength training may combat children's decreasing activity

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(HealthDay)—Strength training increases strength in boys and girls, and increases daily spontaneous physical activity (PA) behavior in boys, according to a study published online Nov. 4 in *Pediatrics*.

Udo Meinhardt, M.D., from the PEZZ Center for Pediatric Endocrinology Zurich, and colleagues randomized 102 10- to 14-year-old schoolchildren to physical education classes or to participate twice weekly in a guided strength training program for 19 weeks. At baseline, after 19 weeks of training intervention, and after three months of washout, they measured spontaneous PA energy expenditure (PAEE; 3axial accelerometry for seven days), leg and arm strength, and body composition (dual energy radiograph absorptiometry).

The researchers found that, at baseline, there were no significant differences between the groups. From baseline to the end of training, PAEE increased by 10 percent in the intervention group in boys (P = 0.02), but not in girls. In both boys and girls, leg and arm strength were increased with the training intervention. No changes were seen in any other variables. There was a significant negative correlation for baseline PAEE and changes in PAEE.

"Strength training may be a promising strategy in schools to counteract decreasing levels of PA," the authors conclude.

More information: Abstract
Full Text (subscription or payment may be required)