

Secular and longitudinal trends in dieting strategies in young adult women from 1982 to 2012

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Research to be presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for the Study of Ingestive Behavior (SSIB), the foremost society for research into all aspects of eating and drinking behaviors, finds that the younger a woman is when she goes on her first diet, the more likely she is to experience several negative health outcomes later in life.

Dieting is very common among girls and young women; however, people often fail to consider the long-term consequences of [weight-loss diets](#), particularly in those who begin dieting at a young age. A team led by Dr. Pamela Keel from Florida State University asked college women in 1982, 1992, 2002, and 2012 to report their dieting and [weight](#) history. The team then followed women 10-years later and examined the impact of dieting history on long-term health outcomes. The younger a woman was when she started her first diet, the more likely she was to use extreme weight control behaviors like self-induced vomiting, misuse alcohol, and be overweight or obese when she reached her 30's.

While the cause of these outcomes is not determined here, discouraging weight loss diets in young girls may reduce risk for eating, alcohol, and weight-related problems in adulthood. Public health initiatives should promote behaviors that increase wellness in girls, such as increasing activity, decreasing leisure time watching TV and on computers, and consuming more fruits and vegetables. Such interventions may need to begin as early as elementary school to support girls as they enter puberty,

a time when their bodies will naturally experience rapid growth, weight gain, and an increase in body fat.

Provided by Society for the Study of Ingestive Behavior

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