

# Family-based treatments may help address obesity in children

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Researchers found that a family-based treatment for obesity in children—which included nutritional advice, exercise, and behavioral counseling—was effective.

The [treatment](#) lasted for about a year, but severely obese children or children who had significant metabolic disturbances remained in secondary care for a longer time. Participants' body mass index standard deviation scores (BMI-SDS) remained significantly lower than at the start of the study throughout a three-year follow-up period.

The study included 654 [children](#) aged 2-18 years who were treated for obesity in the pediatric units of three Finnish hospitals. Factors associated with a successful weight loss were young age and high BMI-SDS at baseline, good motivation for treatment, and adherence to the treatment protocol.

"Adolescence and acanthosis nigricans—a skin condition characterized by dark, velvety patches in body folds and creases—predicted a significantly worse outcome," said Dr. Marketta Dalla Valle, first author of the *Acta Paediatrica* study. "Targeted treatment programs for adolescents could lead to better results."

**More information:** *Acta Paediatrica* (2017). [DOI: 10.1111/apa.13953](https://doi.org/10.1111/apa.13953)

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