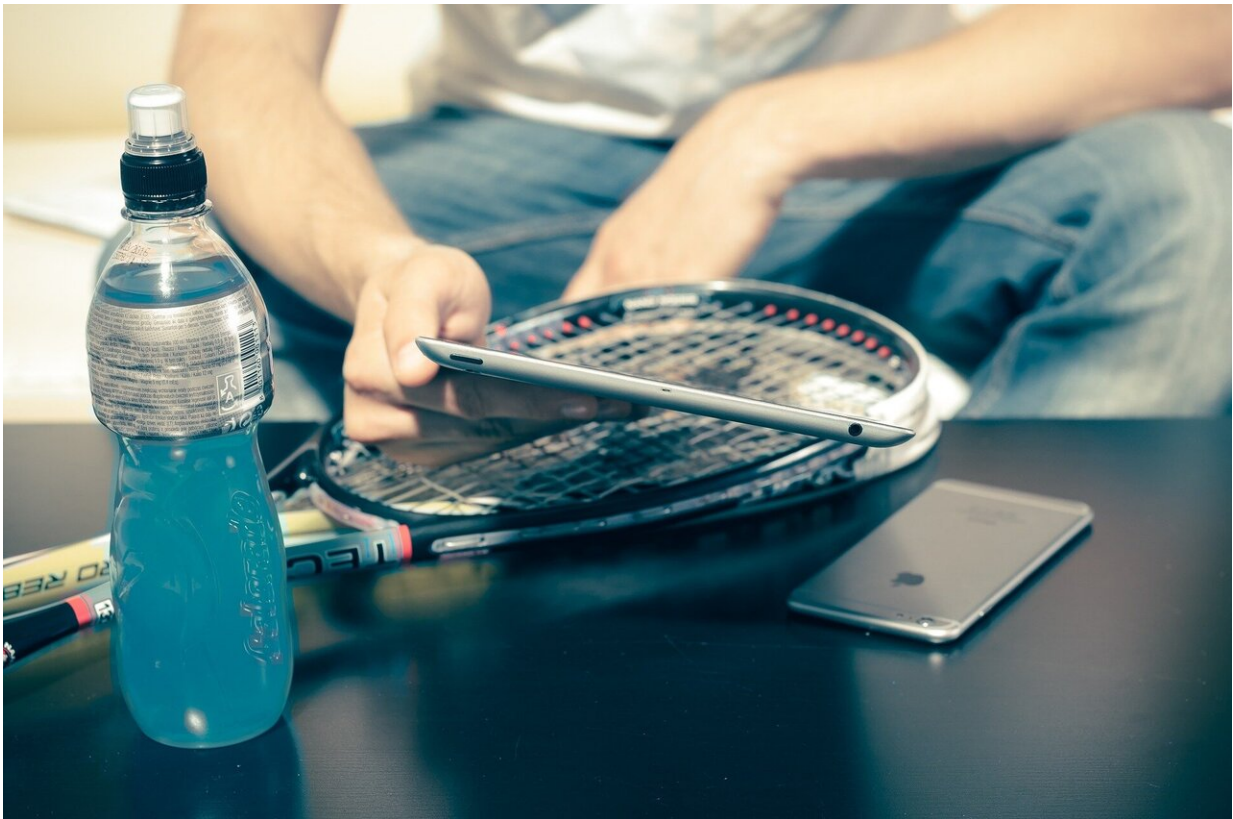


Positive self-image and self-esteem protects against weight gain in adolescence

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A new study from the University of Bergen (UiB) shows that the way young people view their bodies have a great impact on their BMI.

In a two-year follow up study among 1225 Norwegian adolescents in their [early teens](#), professor emeritus Eivind Meland and his team examined how body mass index, self-esteem and self-rated health were mutually impacted and influenced by body dissatisfaction.

"We revealed that positive self-image and self-esteem protected against [weight gain](#)," says Meland.

The girls had in general lower body confidence than boys, the study shows.

Body dissatisfaction

The eager to be thinner, dieting, and wanting to change something with the body all impaired self-rated health and [self-esteem](#) after and during the two years' observation. The eager to be fatter was associated with getting thinner, and the eager to lose weight was associated with body mass gain as compared with peers who were content with their body.

"We conclude that health promotive efforts in adolescence should be based on self- and body-acceptance," say Meland.

More information: Eivind Meland et al. How body concerns, body mass, self-rated health and self-esteem are mutually impacted in early adolescence: a longitudinal cohort study, *BMC Public Health* (2021). [DOI: 10.1186/s12889-021-10553-x](https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-021-10553-x)

Provided by University of Bergen

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