

Diabetes risk awareness not linked to risk-reducing behavior in youth

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Diabetes risk perception and awareness are not associated with greater

engagement in risk-reducing behaviors among U.S. youth aged 12 to 17 years with overweight or obesity, according to a study published online May 3 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Patricia Chu, M.D., from the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, and colleagues utilized data from the U.S. National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey 2011 to 2018 to examine associations between diabetes risk perception and/or awareness and health behaviors in youth. The sample included 1,341 youths aged 12 to 17 years with a [body mass index](#) in the 85th percentile or higher, without known diabetes, representing 8,716,794 U.S. youths.

The researchers found that 8.6 percent of the participants had elevated hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c). Overall, 30.1 and 26.5 percent of youth with elevated HbA1c reported risk perception and had risk awareness, respectively. Risk perception was associated with increased television watching and approximately one less day per week with at least 60 minutes of physical activity, but not with nutrition or attempts at [weight loss](#).

There was no association seen for awareness with health behaviors. Mixed associations were observed for potential barriers: Larger households reported lower consumption of non-home-prepared meals and lower screen time, while about 20 fewer minutes per day of physical activity were seen for public versus [private insurance](#).

"Diabetes [risk perception](#) and awareness were not associated with healthier lifestyle, highlighting that raising risk awareness alone may be insufficient to motivate behavior changes," the authors write.

One author disclosed receiving publishing royalties from Routledge.

More information: Patricia Chu et al, Perception and Awareness of

Diabetes Risk and Reported Risk-Reducing Behaviors in Adolescents, *JAMA Network Open* (2023). DOI: [10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2023.11466](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2023.11466)

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