

Responsive parent intervention in infancy can reduce BMI z score

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(HealthDay)—A responsive parenting intervention initiated in early infancy can reduce body mass index (BMI) z score; however, a 36-month multicomponent behavioral intervention does not change BMI trajectory, according to two studies published in the Aug. 7 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Ian M. Paul, M.D., from the Penn State College of Medicine in Hershey, and colleagues conducted a randomized trial comparing a responsive parenting [intervention](#) designed to prevent childhood obesity versus a home safety intervention among 279 primiparous mother-child dyads. Overall, 83.2 percent of dyads completed the trial. The researchers found that children in the responsive parenting group had a lower mean BMI z score at age 3 years (−0.13 in the responsive parenting group versus 0.15 in the [control](#) group; absolute difference, −0.28). Overall, 11.2 and 19.8 percent of the 116 children in the responsive parenting and control groups, respectively, were overweight; 2.6 and 7.8 percent were obese, respectively.

Shari L. Barkin, M.D., from the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine in Nashville, Tenn., and colleagues randomized 610 parent-child pairs from underserved communities in Nashville to a 36-month, family-based, community-centered intervention targeting health behaviors or a school-readiness control. The researchers found that the mean child BMI was 17.8 and 17.8 kg/m² in the intervention and control groups, respectively. The primary outcome of BMI trajectory over 36 months did not differ significantly between the groups.

"A 36-month multicomponent behavioral intervention did not change BMI trajectory among underserved preschool-age children in Nashville, Tennessee, compared with a control program," Barkin and colleagues write.

One author from the Paul study disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical industry.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text - Paul \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)
[Abstract/Full Text - Barkin \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)
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