

# Early exposure to familial assets may protect against weight gain

February 7 2022

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(HealthDay)—Exposure to familial assets such as maternal parenting

sensitivity and child behavioral regulation in early childhood may protect against weight gain, according to a study published online Feb. 7 in *Pediatrics*.

Brandi Y. Rollins, Ph.D., from Pennsylvania State University in University Park, and colleagues examined whether exposure to familial psychosocial assets and risks in infancy (1 to 15 months) and [early childhood](#) (24 to 54 months) and [child](#) behavioral regulation predict longitudinal change in [body mass index](#) (BMI). Participants included 1,077 mainly non-Hispanic White, English-speaking mother-child dyads. Cumulative familial asset and risk indices were created using measures from the two developmental periods.

The researchers found that all indices predicted being in the overweight/obese trajectory; however, only familial assets reduced the odds of membership in this trajectory when indices were entered into the same model. The odds of membership in the severely obese trajectory were independently reduced by familial assets and child behavioral regulation. The negative effects of familial risk on BMI trajectory membership were buffered by child behavioral regulation and familial assets.

"Pediatricians and other clinicians who monitor children's growth can use the present findings to tailor messages to parents about the potential value of improving familial and child psychosocial assets for the prevention of childhood obesity, particularly among children exhibiting early signs of an obesity-prone trajectory," the authors write.

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

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Citation: Early exposure to familial assets may protect against weight gain (2022, February 7)  
retrieved 8 May 2023 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2022-02-early-exposure-familial-assets-weight.html>

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