

Weight gain in children has no association with sugar-sweetened beverage consumption

13 June 2008

An analysis of 12 recent studies indicate that there is virtually no link between the consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages and weight gain in children and teens. The meta-analysis is published in the June issue of the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. Source: Strategic Communications

"My co-authors and I carefully analyzed 12 studies using scientifically validated methods and found that there is virtually no association between sugar-sweetened beverage consumption and weight gain in children and teens," Dr. Maureen Storey said. "In fact, the evidence strongly suggests that reducing or eliminating sugar-sweetened beverages would have almost no impact on children and teens weight. While other investigators have reached other conclusions, our findings are consistent with three recently published review articles that concluded that the evidence that adolescent consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages leads to weight gain is 'weak or equivocal.'"

Weight gain occurs when an individual consumes more calories than he or she burns – the source of the calories is irrelevant. The beverage industry is already working to educate children about the importance of calorie intake and voluntarily implemented National School Beverage Guidelines which remove full-calorie soft drinks and provide more low- and no-calorie beverage options in schools. In addition, the beverage industry supports daily physical activity and recess for students across the country.

"Sugar-sweetened beverages are a source of energy and energy consumption in excess of energy expended will lead to weight gain. Sugar-sweetened beverages should be consumed in moderation and as part of a balanced diet and active lifestyle," Dr. Storey said.

APA citation: Weight gain in children has no association with sugar-sweetened beverage consumption (2008, June 13) retrieved 28 June 2022 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2008-06-weight-gain-children-association-sugar-sweetened.html>

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