Can High-Sugar Diets Harm the Livers of Healthy Men?

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An excessive amount of fat in the liver is considered unhealthy. Now, new findings published in the journal Clinical Science suggest that eating too much sugar is associated with boosting levels of fat in the livers of even the healthy men, reports HealthDay News.

For the study, British researchers followed the liver health of a group of middle-aged men with high (11 men) or low (14 men) quantities of fat in their liver. Those carrying excess fat also suffered from non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD). (The common condition is defined as a surplus of fat in the liver of people who drink little or no alcohol.) Scientists asked participants to follow one of two regimens for three months: a high-sugar diet consisting of 650 calories of sugar or a low-sugar meal plan that included no more than 140 calories of sugar per day.

Researchers determined that the men with NAFLD who adhered to the high-sugar diet underwent changes in fat metabolism linked to a greater risk for cardiovascular disease. These same changes, however, also occurred in the group of men who initially had low levels of fat at the start of the study before they switched to the high-sugar diet.

“While most adults don’t consume the high levels of sugar we used in this study, some children and teenagers may reach these levels of sugar intake by overconsuming fizzy drinks and sweets,” said Bruce Griffin, BSc, PhD, a professor of nutritional metabolism at the University of Surrey in England and the study’s lead researcher. “This raises concern for the future health of the younger population, especially in the view of the alarmingly high prevalence of NAFLD in children and teenagers and exponential rise of fatal liver disease in adults.”

After a review of these results, experts concluded that folks should cut back on sugar and keep track of how much of the sweet stuff they consume. Furthermore, they suggest that people double-check nutrition labels because sugar is found in many unexpected foods, such as sauces, condiments and savory snacks.

Click here to learn how some companies sweeten their products with sugar and call the ingredient another name.

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