Sugar-Laden “Junk Food” May Create More Fat Cells in Kids

June 22, 2010

The fructose (a component of high-fructose corn syrup) found in soft drinks, candy and processed foods looks like the culprit responsible for expanding America's waistline, according to a study presented at the Endocrine Society's annual meeting and reported on by HealthDay News.

For the study, researchers from the University of Bristol in Britain took pre-adipocyte cells (the ones that become fat cells) from 32 prepubescent children of normal weight. These cells were both subcutaneous (right below the skin) and visceral (from deeper in the abdomen) cells. Scientists soaked and matured the cells in one of three solutions: normal-level glucose, high-level glucose or high fructose.

Findings showed only visceral fat cells in the high-fructose solution divided and multiplied more than cells soaked in normal glucose. But both types of cells had an increased resistance to insulin (a diabetes risk factor) when exposed to glucose.

Childhood obesity has more than tripled in the past 30 years, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and there is a growing concern about the increased occurrence of heart disease and type 2 diabetes in youth.

"The fear is that this generation might be the first generation that might not outlive their parents," said Keri Gans, a spokeswoman for the American Dietetic Association (ADA).

But some scientists said you can't draw conclusions from a single study that was not done on humans (the study only included human cells in a test tube). Plus, they stressed that high fructose corn syrup is not pure fructose.

Nevertheless, Gans said the message is clear. "We're talking sugar, and the bottom line is too much sugar of any kind is going to give you too many calories, and too many calories lead to weight gain—and that's where the problem lies," she stressed.

Click here to find out how you can help your kids fight obesity even before they’re born.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/kids-sugar-diabetes-18610-3690