

Being Overweight at a Young Age Linked To Changes In Adults' Heart

Overweight people are at a higher risk of developing high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease, regardless of their age, a new study from the University of Bristol in the U.K. says. Researchers chose to concentrate on the Body Mass Index (BMI) and routinely collected cardiovascular data from young adults aged 17 and 21. Dr. Kaitlin Wade, lead author of the study, says,

Our results suggested that having a higher BMI likely causes higher blood pressure...These findings suggest that BMI is likely to have an adverse causal impact on cardiac structure even in young adults...Our results support efforts to reduce BMI to within a normal, healthy range from a young age to prevent later cardiovascular disease."

Healthy or Healthier

A healthy BMI is considered to be between 18.5 and 24.9, and the average American (male and female) is objectively overweight at 26.5. This study found a definite link between higher BMI and incidences of high blood pressure in young adults. It also found that a high BMI correlated to other cardiovascular anomalies, even in study participants that were considered otherwise healthy.

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Healthy 17-year-olds with a high BMI were more likely to have an enlarged left ventricle, which develops when the heart's main pumping chamber has to work harder than normal. This can be due to high blood pressure or a response to a larger body

needing a greater volume of blood. The muscle can eventually lose its elasticity and subsequently the ability to pump enough blood. That can later lead to an irregular heartbeat, stroke, or sudden cardiac arrest.

The Other Factors

So how does this happen? Why are healthy seventeen-year-olds experiencing cardiovascular symptoms more traditionally found in older people?

The 1970s ushered in an era of intense focus on the risk factors surrounding heart diseases such as smoking, “unhealthy” diet, or untreated high blood pressure. They also coincided with the rise of new medications like beta-blockers to treat these issues. These measures resulted in fewer deaths from heart disease and were treated as successes. Meanwhile, the causes of heart disease weren’t necessarily addressed, and in some instances were even swept under the rug. For example, the Sugar Research Foundation discovered that sucrose offset rodent metabolisms, increasing their levels of triglycerides. This leads to clogged arteries and increases a person’s predisposition to cardiovascular disease.

Today’s young person is dealing with an entirely new set of risk factors, the majority of them related to diet. Every single one of the people in this study has been eating or exposed to GMOs since birth, the first generation to claim that dubious honor. They’re also suffered through the modern world’s incredibly confusing relationship with fat. McDonald’s, for example, switched their fry oil from beef tallow to soy-corn oil the year after the subjects for this review were born. Increased agricultural chemicals, plastics of dubious health, and more medicated childhoods are only some of the other factors to examine when trying to diagnose why 17-year-olds are experiencing poor health before their time.

Related: *Popular Antibiotics May Increase Susceptibility to Serious Heart Condition*

New Discoveries

We predict the number of studies discovering young people experiencing health conditions previously associated with old people will only increase. There are quite a few happening now, and a rise in cancer and heart disease among the next generation is here. The single most important thing we can teach our children is how to eat truly healthy, exercise, and take care of themselves.

Sources:

- *Being overweight tied to changes young adults' heart structure, function* – Reuters
- *Weight differences contribute to heart health in the young* – University of Bristol
- *How Obesity Can Affect Your Heart* – US News
- *Sugar Industry Has Had Evidence Linking Sugar to Heart Disease for Nearly Half a Century* – Organic Lifestyle Magazine
- *U.S. heart disease rates decline* – Reuters