

New Study Shows Childhood Diet and Exercise Produces Less Anxious Adults

A new study conducted by UC Riverside suggests that exercise and healthy diet in childhood lead to adults with bigger brains and less anxiety. The study aimed to examine the long term benefits of a healthy diet and exercise as the two are usually examined separately, or short term.

Researchers divided young mice into four groups, those with access to exercise, those without, and those with a standard healthy diet, and those with a standard western diet.

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Mice were put on their assigned diet as soon as they were done weaning and stayed on the same diet for three weeks until sexual maturity. The mice then went through an additional eight weeks of “washout” where they were kept with out wheels on the standard healthy diet. Researchers then measured aerobic capacity, did behavioral analysis, and testes different levels of hormones.

Previously, the research team found that eating too much fat and sugar as a child can alter the microbiome for life, even if they later eat healthier. Going forward, the team plans to investigate whether fat or sugar is more responsible for the negative effects they measured in Western-diet-fed mice.

Childhood diet and exercise creates healthier, less anxious adults

Researchers concluded that early life exercise resulted in less anxious behaviors in adult mice and led to increases in

adult muscle and brain mass. When fed standard western-style diets the mice became fatter and grew into adults with a preference for unhealthy foods.