

[IMAGE]

Terminating Teen Obesity: Say "Hasta" to Pasta

According to the American Obesity Association, approximately 15 percent of children ages 12-19 are obese; moreover, the risk for developing type 2 diabetes becomes greater after puberty, according to a new study published in the August issue of the *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine*. To determine the "effect of dietary composition on body weight and diabetes risk factors ... in adolescents," researchers studied 16 teens over a period of one year, comparing those who followed a low-carbohydrate eating plan to those on a low-fat diet.

According to the study, teens who decreased their daily carbohydrate intake lost significantly more weight than those who stuck to low-fat diets only. Furthermore, subjects in the low-carb group did not regain the weight for six to 12 months following the initial weight loss. Researchers noted that the low-carb plan also reduces blood sugar (glucose) levels more effectively than the low-fat alternative; insulin-resistance level increases were substantially less in the low-carb group than the low-fat group.

This is all positive news, although the researchers note that their findings are preliminary, and more research is needed. However, the important points to remember are that it's important that your child get on the road to health and wellness early, and you should always talk to your doctor before starting your child on any specialized eating plan for weight loss.

Reference:

Ebbeling CB, Leidig MM, Sinclair KB, et al. A reduced glycemic-load diet in the treatment of adolescent obesity. *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine* August 2003; Volume 157, Number 8, pp.773-79.

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