

[IMAGE]

The Wrong Path

By Editorial Staff

What are ultraprocessed foods? To understand what they are, consider unprocessed or minimally processed foods, defined by Harvard Health as "whole foods in which the vitamins and nutrients are still intact. The food is in its natural (or nearly natural) state." By comparison, ultraprocessed foods are the foods we too commonly see in grocery stores – and our homes. Again quoting from Harvard Health:

"They most likely have many added ingredients such as sugar, salt, fat, and artificial colors or preservatives. Ultra-processed foods are made mostly from substances extracted from foods, such as fats, starches, added sugars, and hydrogenated fats. They may also contain additives like artificial colors and flavors or stabilizers. Examples of these foods are frozen meals, soft drinks, hot dogs and cold cuts, fast food, packaged cookies, cakes, and salty snacks."

Now to the title of this article. As you might guess, ultraprocessed foods are the wrong path for everyone, but according to research, specifically for children because they put kids on a dangerous course toward obesity into early adulthood. Researchers have found that trajectories of body-mass index (BMI), fat mass index, weight, and waist circumference from 7-24 years of age were greater among children with the highest vs. lowest consumption of ultraprocessed foods.

In other words, give your children access to more ultraprocessed foods (either by providing it in your home directly or not monitoring their eating habits when they're away from home), and the curve toward weight problems increases – all the way through early adulthood. Definitely not the path you want them on as they journey toward lifetime health and wellness. Talk to your doctor to learn more.

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