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Health newsfeed for Friday, October 12, 2012

HEADLINE: KIDS AND SUGAR

ANCHOR LEAD: JUST ELIMINATING SUGAR IN BEVERAGES HELPS KIDS AVOID WEIGHT GAIN, ELIZABETH TRACEY REPORTS

Kids who substitute sugar-free for sugar sweetened beverages don't gain weight as quickly as those who consume the sugared variety, two studies in the New England Journal of Medicine demonstrate.

Michael Klag, dean of the Bloomberg School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins, says these studies targeted drinks alone.

KLAG: They make the point that previous studies have done sort of a multiphasic intervention, where they try to increase activity, try to decrease TV watching, all those things we know are healthier for adolescent children. But they focused on only one thing, and it worked in the entire group at one year. :15

Weight gain slowed in both studies.

KLAG: What they found is that weight increased by six kilos in the sugar free group as opposed to 7.37 kilos in the sugar group so big differences. And then they also looked at measures of adiposity, skin fold measurements, waist to height ratio, and fat mass, and they also increased significantly less in the sugar free group. :21

In view of our obesity epidemic in children, choosing sugar free varieties of drinks appears wise. At Johns Hopkins, I'm Elizabeth Tracey.