

Restricting sugar, not calories, improves youths' health

By Victoria Colliver, San Francisco Chronicle

The health of obese kids can rapidly and dramatically improve just by taking sugar out of their diet for less than 10 days, a new study by researchers at UC San Francisco and Touro University in Vallejo has found.

The researchers put 43 children and teenagers on a nine-day diet that severely restricted sugar without reducing calories, and virtually every measure of metabolic health – blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose levels – improved even though the participants didn't lose weight.

“What this is saying is that sugar is toxic because it's sugar; not because it's calories,” said Robert Lustig, pediatric endocrinologist at UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital San Francisco and lead author of the study. “This proves conclusively, beyond a shadow of doubt, that a calorie is not a calorie.”

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