ECO: stress in children impacts hormones, diet, adiposity

29 May 2014

Photo: U.S. National Institutes of Health

support the theory of cortisol-induced comfort food preference," Michels said in a statement. "Indeed children's stress makes their diet less healthy, which stimulates increases in body fat. This creates potential for a multi-part obesity prevention program, targeting stress (including coping skills) and lifestyle factors (e.g., diet) together."

More information: More Information

(HealthDay)—For children, stress is associated with poorer diet, which stimulates adiposity, according to a study presented at the annual European Congress on Obesity, held from May 28 to 31 in Sofia, Bulgaria.

Nathalie Michels, Ph.D., from Ghent University in Belgium, and colleagues conducted a two-year longitudinal study to examine the relation between stress, diet, and adiposity in 312 Belgian children (aged 5 to 12 years). They measured stress data, including negative events, problem behavior, and negative emotions; food consumption; psychological eating behavior; and adiposity.

The researchers found that more sweet food consumption, emotional eating, external eating, and restrained eating were reported by children with a high stress score. Stress was found to increase adiposity only for children with high sweet food intake and cortisol. There was a correlation between high cortisol and an unhealthy diet, especially sweet foods. In girls, high cortisol correlated with higher leptin levels.

"The associations of cortisol with leptin and diet

APA citation: ECO: stress in children impacts hormones, diet, adiposity (2014, May 29) retrieved 2 May 2021 from https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-05-eco-stress-children-impacts-hormones.html