

DIABETES



Exercise cuts heart risks for type 1 diabetes kids

Tue Aug 28 19:03:42 UTC 2007

NEW YORK (Reuters Health) - Children and teens with type 1 diabetes may be able to reduce their risk of future heart and blood vessel disease by taking part in regular exercise, German researchers report.

In their study of 23,251 type 1 diabetes patients ranging in age from 3 to 18 years old, those who were the most active had the best long-term blood sugar control, Dr. Antje Herbst of the Hospital of Leverkusen and her colleagues found. Study participants who exercised more often were also less likely to have high blood pressure or high cholesterol.

The researchers looked at hemoglobin A1C, which is an indicator of long-term blood glucose control. Among the 44.7 percent of the study participants who did no regular physical activity, hemoglobin A1C averaged 8.1 percent, compared to 7.8 percent for those who were more active. The more active group included 37 percent who exercised once or twice a week and 18.3 percent who exercised three or more times a week.

Higher hemoglobin A1C levels correlated with higher levels of total cholesterol, LDL (the "bad" cholesterol) and triglycerides. Conversely, levels of HDL (the "good" cholesterol) declined as A1C rose. More active individuals also had lower diastolic blood pressure, the lower number on the blood pressure reading.

"Physical activity should represent an important issue in education of children and adolescents with type 1 diabetes and be performed regularly by these patients," Herbst and her team conclude. "The percentage of children with type 1 diabetes not performing any regular physical activity should be reduced."

SOURCE: Diabetes Care, August 2007.