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Children at Risk of Liver Disease Caused by Processed Foods

by Polly A. Wise

(NewsTarget) New research is creating more reasons for you to think twice before feeding processed foods to your children, or eating it yourself for that matter. If you are struggling to change your family's diet to raw foods, there is new evidence for why you may want to make the change sooner rather than later. A diet consisting of mostly processed foods is causing fatty liver disease in the young. Liver disease, primarily found in older adults, is now becoming a disease found in children. All this is being caused by the increase of processed foods in our diet.

A six month [research project](#) led by David S. Ludwig, director of the Optimal Weight for Life program at Children's Hospital Boston was published in the September issue of the journal *Obesity*. The research was conducted on two groups of mice. Both groups were fed the exact same caloric intake but fed different starches. One group was fed processed high glycemic index (HGI) foods and the other, unprocessed low glycemic index (LGI) foods.

[Foodconsumer.org](#) defines Glycemic Index (GI) as "a measure of how fast a food releases glucose from starch. The higher the GI, the faster the food releases glucose." This rapid release of glucose causes the body to release more insulin, which in turn causes the body to store fat. Examples of HGI foods are processed foods such as white rice, foods containing white flour, and even overly processed whole grains. LGI foods consist of mainly unprocessed foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables, nuts, and whole grains.

At the end of the study, both groups of mice weighed the same, but the HGI group had higher body fat, more fat in their blood, and about twice as much fat in their liver. This research has shown that processed food is causing liver disease in many children. While no symptoms are showing in some, it is leading the way for fatal liver disease later in life. There is major concern among health officials that this could be the new health epidemic of the future.

According to an [article](#) from CanWest News Service, a 10 year old girl became the first child diagnosed with cirrhosis of the liver in 2000. Now in 2007, liver disease is being found in 5-7 year olds with the youngest child reported being two years old. Fatty liver disease is now showing up in approximately one in every three obese children.

The question is, how will the health care industry react to this news? Will they encourage consumers to change their diets to mostly unprocessed raw foods, or will they label this as a unique disease? The pharmaceutical companies can then create a new drug marketed to children, in cherry and grape flavors, creating consumers of these drugs for life.

One thing to keep in mind is that [Glycemic Index](#) isn't everything. Some HGI foods are good for you, such as dates, parsnips, and watermelon. On the other hand, some LGI foods such as Peanut M&Ms, Snickers bars, and low-fat ice cream are not good for you and should be avoided. Glycemic Index is just one more factor to consider when selecting a healthy diet. The main point of this research is that a diet of mostly processed foods is causing liver disease even in the very young. To avoid or possibly reverse fatty liver disease, it is important to eat a diet that consists of mostly raw foods.

If you are still eating a diet mostly of processed foods because of their convenience, you may want to consider the inconvenience of the end result. Processed foods are being marketed to fit our hectic lifestyle while silently setting us up to fall prey to the other multi-billion dollar industry, the pharmaceutical companies. We need to be cautious of both industries. They both are getting rich at the expense of our health and that of our children.

This research clearly demonstrates that eating a raw food diet is not just another fad diet NewsTarget is promoting, but rather a necessity for the future health of everyone, including our children. The truth is the safest foods are those that do not have a label of ingredients. We need to rethink how we shop for food, what we eat,

and most of all the future health of our children. How we eat and think about food today will affect how our children eat and think about food as adults. When it comes to diet, their health truly is in our hands. As this new research has proven, providing children with raw foods can literally save their lives.

For more information about Glycemic Index:

<http://lowcarbdiets.about.com/od/whattoeat/a/glycemicindlist.htm>

http://www.mendosa.com/common_foods.htm

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