

Childhood obesity associated with brain abnormalities, study shows

Greater weight and body mass index (BMI) in typically developing 9- to 10-year-olds were associated with poor brain health, said Simone Kaltenhauser, PhD, a post-graduate research fellow at the Yale School of Medicine in New Haven, Connecticut, during the [Radiological Society of North America](#) (RSNA) annual meeting.

“At higher weight and body mass index, we found extensive alterations in brain health, including in the gray matter cortex and in white matter fiber tracts, as well as the functional coupling of brain units,” Kaltenhauser told *MedPage Today*. “We were surprised these changes were visible so early on.”

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The children in the study will undergo serial MRI every 2 years. “There are more data to come as we study these children, which will help us to draw definite conclusions,” she added. “We will also have the opportunity to monitor the brain development over a longer period of time.”

She said continuing the study will give the researchers a chance to determine if the brain changes being seen now are just artifacts of growing up or if they pose real brain health danger.

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