**Smoking in pregnancy, kids skipping breakfast could lead to child obesity**

[**HEALTH AND FITNESS**](http://www.hindustantimes.com/health-and-fitness) Updated: Nov 12, 2016 12:38 IST

IANS

According to a study, smoking in pregnancy, children skipping breakfast or having insufficient sleep may lead to obesity or weight gain among kids.

Smoking in pregnancy has been linked to a higher risk of a child being overweight, possibly due to a link between foetal tobacco exposure and infant motor co-ordination which could be a developmental pathway to BMI growth.

Being overweight or obese is linked to a child having poorer mental health, which can extend into adolescence and adulthood.

This poorer psychosocial well-being includes low self-esteem, unhappiness as well as risky behaviours such as cigarette smoking and alcohol consumption.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

“This study shows that disrupted routines, exemplified by irregular sleeping patterns and skipping breakfast, could influence weight gain through increased appetite and the consumption of energy-dense foods,” said Yvonne Kelly, Professor at the University College London, Britain.

The study published in the journal Pediatrics, identified four patterns of weight development. The large majority of children, 83.3 per cent had a stable non-overweight BMI, while 13.1 per cent had moderate increasing BMIs while 2.5 per cent had steeply increasing BMIs.

The smallest group, 0.6 per cent, had BMIs in the obese range at the age of three but were similar to the stable group by the age of seven.

After taking account of background factors, breastfeeding and the early introduction of solid food were not associated with children’s weight.

Likewise, sugary drink consumption, fruit intake, TV viewing and sports participation were not strong predictors of unhealthy weight gain.