**'Kids with 3+ hours daily screen time have high risk for diabetes'**

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MUMBAI: Parents of children, who spend hours with their Gameboys and PSPs, should worry. A new study published in the 'Archives of Disease in Childhood' medical journal on Monday states that daily [**screen time**](http://m.timesofindia.com/topic/screen-time) of three or more hours is linked to development of [**diabetes**](http://m.timesofindia.com/topic/Diabetes) in children.

Increased screen time could increase the total body fat as well as insulin resistance, which occurs when cells fail to respond to insulin, the hormone produced by the pancreas to control levels of blood glucose.  
  
The researchers assessed 4,500 students in the age group of 9-10 years from 200 primary schools in London, Birmingham, and Leicester for a series of metabolic and cardiovascular risk factors. "These included blood fats, insulin resistance, fasting blood glucose levels, inflammatory chemicals, blood pressure and body fat. The children were also asked about their daily screen time to include [**TV**](http://m.timesofindia.com/topic/TV), and use of computers and [**games**](http://m.timesofindia.com/topic/games) consoles.

"28% said they clocked up 1-2 hours; 13% said their daily tally was 2-3 hours; and around one in five (18%) said they spent more than 3 hours on it every day," said the abstract of the study. "Some 4% of the children said that screen time didn't take up any of their day, while just over a third (37%) said they spent an hour or less on it," it added.

Boys (22%) were more likely than girls (14%) to say they spent 3 or more hours on screen time, as were African-Caribbean (23%) kids compared with their white European (16%) or South Asian peers (16%).  
  
The study linked screen time with factors such as weight in relation to height, and skinfolds thickness and fat mass. It found these levels were higher in children reporting 3+ hours of daily screen time than in those who said they spent an hour or less on it.  
  
"Our findings suggest that reducing screen time may be beneficial in reducing type 2 diabetes risk factors, in both boys and girls and in different ethnic groups from an early age," said the study.