

1 **TITLE**

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3 A low sugar diet enhances *Drosophila* body size in males and females via sex-specific  
4 mechanisms

5

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20 **RUNNING TITLE**

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22 Sex-specific mechanisms of low sugar-induced growth

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24 **KEYWORDS**

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26 *Drosophila*, sex difference, diet, sugar, insulin, target of rapamycin, growth, body size

27

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34

35 **ABSTRACT**

36

37 In *Drosophila*, changes to dietary protein elicit different body size responses between  
38 the sexes. Whether this sex difference in nutrient-dependent body size regulation  
39 extends to other nutrients, such as dietary sugar, remains unclear. Here, we show that  
40 reducing dietary sugar enhanced body size in *Drosophila* male and female larvae.  
41 Indeed, the largest body size was found in larvae reared in a diet without added sugar.  
42 Despite the equivalent body size effects of a low sugar diet between males and  
43 females, we detected sex-specific changes to the insulin/insulin-like growth factor (IIS)  
44 and target of rapamycin (TOR) signaling pathways. Further, we show that the metabolic  
45 changes observed in larvae reared on a low sugar diet differ between the sexes. Thus,  
46 despite identical phenotypic responses to dietary sugar in males and females, distinct  
47 changes to cell signaling pathways and whole-body metabolism were associated with  
48 the increased body size in each sex. This highlights the importance of including both  
49 sexes in all mechanistic studies on larval growth, as males and females may use  
50 different molecular and metabolic mechanisms to achieve similar phenotypic outcomes.

51

52 **INTRODUCTION**

53

54 In *Drosophila*, dietary nutrients impact the rate and duration of larval growth to influence  
55 final body size. Nutrient quantity promotes growth during larval development, as  
56 conditions where nutrients are plentiful favour larger body sizes (Edgar, 2006;  
57 Hietakangas and Cohen, 2009; Nijhout et al., 2014). Nutrient quality is also critical in  
58 regulating larval growth, as individual macronutrients differ in their body size effects. For  
59 example, while dietary protein promotes a larger body size across a wide concentration  
60 range (Britton and Edgar, 1998; Britton et al., 2002; Edgar, 2006; Shingleton et al.,  
61 2017), moderate or high levels of dietary sugar inhibit growth and reduce body size  
62 (Musselman et al., 2011; Pasco and Léopold, 2012; Reis, 2016). This suggests a  
63 complex relationship between individual macronutrients and body size.

64 One factor that influences the magnitude of nutrient-dependent changes to  
65 *Drosophila* body size is biological sex (McDonald et al., 2020 preprint; Millington et al.,  
66 2021a; Shingleton et al., 2017; Stillwell et al., 2010; Teder and Tammaru, 2005). For  
67 example, manipulating nutrient quantity by altering dietary protein and carbohydrates  
68 causes sex-biased trait size effects (Shingleton et al., 2017). Male and female  
69 phenotypic responses to altered nutrient quality also differ, as the magnitude of protein-  
70 dependent changes to body size are larger in females (Millington et al., 2021a). Due to  
71 the widespread use of mixed-sex groups in larval growth studies, however, it remains  
72 unclear whether sex-specific body size responses to dietary protein extend to other  
73 macronutrients, such as sugar.

74 Our examination of larval development revealed that a reduction in dietary sugar  
75 significantly increased the rate of growth and body size in males and females. Indeed,  
76 the largest body size was observed in a diet with no added sugar. Despite the  
77 equivalent body size increase in males and females, sex-specific mechanisms underlie  
78 the larger body size of larvae raised in a low sugar diet. In females, the low sugar diet  
79 stimulated increased target of rapamycin (TOR) pathway activity, whereas the activity of  
80 the insulin/insulin-like growth factor signaling pathway (IIS) was enhanced in males.  
81 Genetic studies confirmed that these female- and male-specific changes to TOR and  
82 IIS, respectively, were important for the low sugar-induced increase in body size, and  
83 biochemical studies revealed sex-specific changes to metabolic gene expression and  
84 metabolism. Together, our findings provide additional mechanistic insight into how  
85 dietary sugar affects development by revealing sex-specific changes to cell signaling  
86 pathways and metabolism. This highlights the importance of including both sexes in all  
87 larval growth studies, as we show that equivalent phenotypic outcomes may be  
88 achieved via distinct mechanisms in each sex.

89

## 90 **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

91

### 92 **A low sugar diet promotes an increased rate of growth and augments body size**

93

94 To determine the body size effects of dietary sugar in each sex, we quantified pupal  
95 volume in *white*<sup>1118</sup> (*w*; FBgn0003996) male and female larvae reared in diets with  
96 different levels of dietary sugar. Because dietary sugar represses growth in a mixed-sex

97 larval group (Musselman et al., 2011; Pasco and Léopold, 2012), we started with a  
98 widely-used diet (1S) (Lewis, 1960) and removed sugar in a stepwise manner until no  
99 added sugar remained (0S). In  $w^{1118}$  females, body size was significantly larger in  
100 larvae cultured on a diet with half (0.5S), or one-quarter (0.25S), the amount of sugar  
101 found in 1S (Fig. 1A). Interestingly, the largest body size was found in female larvae  
102 reared in 0S (Fig. 1A).

103 In  $w^{1118}$  males, body size was significantly larger in larvae reared on 0.5S and  
104 0.25S compared with larvae raised on 1S (Fig. 1B). As in females, the largest body size  
105 among males was recorded on 0S (Fig. 1B). Importantly, the body size effects of  
106 reduced sugar diets were equivalent between the sexes (Fig. 1C; Supplemental file 4),  
107 a finding we reproduced using adult weight (Fig. 1D), indicating that phenotypic  
108 responses to dietary sugar were not different between males and females. Because a  
109 diet with fewer calories has no effect on body size (Millington et al., 2021a), our findings  
110 suggest that the larger size of larvae raised in 0S can be attributed to less dietary sugar.  
111 This agrees with data from a mixed-sex larval group showing that dietary sugar inhibits  
112 growth (Musselman et al., 2011; Pasco and Léopold, 2012), and extends previous  
113 findings by showing the body size effects occur in both sexes.

114 To determine the growth rate in larvae reared on low sugar diets, we measured  
115 the time between egg-laying and pupariation in both sexes. In  $w^{1118}$  females, time to  
116 50% pupariation was significantly shorter in larvae raised on each reduced-sugar diet  
117 compared with genotype-matched larvae cultured in 1S (Fig. 1E, F). Time to 50%  
118 pupariation was also reduced in  $w^{1118}$  males raised on each reduced-sugar diet  
119 compared with genotype-matched males reared on 1S (Fig. 1G, H). Given that diets

120 with less added sugar shorten the larval growth period and increase body size, our data  
121 suggests the larval growth rate in each sex was significantly accelerated in a low sugar  
122 context.

123

124 **A low sugar diet has sex-biased effects on insulin/insulin-like growth factor (IIS)  
125 and target of rapamycin (TOR) signaling**

126

127 Many signaling pathways control organismal and tissue growth during development,  
128 however, IIS and TOR have emerged as key regulators of nutrient-dependent growth  
129 (Gokhale and Shingleton, 2015; Grewal, 2009; Koyama and Mirth, 2018; Lecuit and Le  
130 Goff, 2007; Teleman, 2010). Indeed, high levels of IIS and TOR activity promote a  
131 larger body size (Böhni et al., 1999; Britton et al., 2002; Chen et al., 1996; Fernandez et  
132 al., 1995; Patel et al., 2003; Poltilove et al., 2000; Zhang et al., 2000). Given the larger  
133 body size of males and females cultured on 0S, we examined IIS and TOR activity in  
134 larvae reared on 0S and 1S. To measure IIS activity, we quantified mRNA levels of  
135 genes that are coregulated by transcription factor Forkhead box, sub-group O (Foxo;  
136 FBgn0038197) (e.g. *Insulin receptor* (*InR*; FBgn0283499), *brummer* (*bmm*; FBgn0036449),  
137 and *eukaryotic initiation factor 4E-binding protein* (*4E-BP*; FBgn0261560)). For example,  
138 when IIS activity is high, Foxo is repressed and mRNA levels of *InR*, *bmm*, and *4E-BP*  
139 are low (Alic et al., 2011; Jünger et al., 2003; Puig and Tjian, 2005; Zinke et al., 2002).

140 In  $w^{1118}$  females, mRNA levels of Foxo target genes were not different between  
141 larvae reared in 0S and 1S (Fig. 2A), suggesting IIS activity was not altered in females.  
142 In contrast, mRNA levels of Foxo target genes were significantly lower in  $w^{1118}$  male

143 larvae in 0S (Fig. 2B), indicating enhanced IIS activity. Importantly, feeding behaviour  
144 was not different between the sexes in either diet (Fig. 2C). While increased IIS activity  
145 in males raised on 0S may be due to improved insulin sensitivity, changes to mRNA  
146 levels of two genes upregulated by insulin insensitivity (*Neural Lazarillo (NLaz;*  
147 FBgn0053126) and *puckered (puc; FBgn0243512)*) were not consistent with improved  
148 insulin sensitivity in either sex (Fig. 2D, E) (Lourido et al., 2021; Pasco and Léopold,  
149 2012). Indeed, altered *puc* mRNA levels in males likely reflect Foxo activity, as *puc* is a  
150 Foxo target (Bai et al., 2013). Together, these findings reveal a previously unrecognized  
151 sex difference in IIS regulation in a low sugar context, adding to a growing body of  
152 evidence showing sex differences in the nutrient-dependent regulation of IIS in larvae  
153 (Millington et al., 2021a).

154 We next measured TOR activity by monitoring the phosphorylation of TOR's  
155 downstream target Ribosomal protein S6 kinase (S6k; FBgn0283472). In *w<sup>1118</sup>* females,  
156 levels of phosphorylated S6k (pS6k) were higher in 0S in multiple biological replicates  
157 (Fig. 2F; Fig S1A), an effect we did not reproduce in *w<sup>1118</sup>* males (Fig. 2F; Fig. S1A).  
158 This suggests that the low sugar diet caused a female-biased increase in TOR activity,  
159 revealing a previously unrecognized sex difference in the nutrient-dependent regulation  
160 of TOR. Taken together, these findings not only extend knowledge of sex-specific IIS  
161 regulation, but also provide the first report of sex-biased TOR regulation.

162

163 **Sex-biased requirement for IIS, *Drosophila* insulin-like peptides, and TOR in  
164 promoting the low sugar-induced increase in body size**

165

166 To determine whether sex-biased changes to IIS and TOR play a role in mediating the  
167 low sugar-induced increase in body size, we measured body size in male and female  
168 larvae carrying mutations in each pathway that blunt high levels of IIS and TOR  
169 activation (Chen et al., 1996; Millington et al., 2021a; Rideout et al., 2015; Zhang et al.,  
170 2000). To determine the requirement for IIS, we measured pupal volume in  $w^{1118}$  larvae,  
171 and in larvae heterozygous for a hypomorphic allele of *InR* ( $InR^{E19/+}$ ), in 1S and 0S.  
172 While body size was larger in  $w^{1118}$  male larvae reared on 0S than 1S (Fig. 3A), the low  
173 sugar-induced increase in body size was blocked in  $InR^{E19/+}$  males (Fig. 3A;  
174 genotype:diet interaction  $p<0.0001$ ). Thus, IIS activity was required in males for  
175 increased body size in 0S. In contrast, female  $w^{1118}$  and  $InR^{E19/+}$  larvae reared on 0S  
176 were significantly larger than genotype-matched females raised on 1S (Fig. 3B). While  
177 we detected a significant genotype:diet interaction in females ( $p<0.0001$ ), the magnitude  
178 of genotype effects on the body size response to low sugar was smaller in females than  
179 in males (sex:diet:genotype interaction  $p=0.0114$ ). Thus, reduced IIS function had a  
180 male-biased impact on the low sugar-induced increase in body size.

181 Beyond *InR*, we reared male and female larvae lacking the coding sequences for  
182 *Drosophila insulin-like peptide 2* (*dilp2*; Fbgn0036046), *Drosophila insulin-like peptide 3*  
183 (*dilp3*; Fbgn0044050), and *Drosophila insulin-like peptide 5* (*dilp5*; Fbgn0044038) on 0S  
184 and 1S (Grönke et al., 2010). These Dilps are produced and secreted by insulin-  
185 producing cells in the brain (Brogliolo et al., 2001; Géminard et al., 2009; Ikeya et al.,  
186 2002; Rulifson et al., 2002). Circulating Dilps stimulate IIS activity and growth by binding  
187 to *InR* on target cells (Teleman, 2010). In males, loss of *dilp2* and *dilp3* blunted the low  
188 sugar-induced increase in body compared with  $w^{1118}$  controls (genotype:diet  $p<0.0001$

189 for both); loss of *dilp5* had no effect (genotype:diet  $p=0.9751$ ) (Fig. 3C). In females,  
190 while loss of *dilp2* and *dilp3* (genotype:diet  $p<0.0001$  for both), but not *dilp5*  
191 (genotype:diet  $p=0.9389$ ), blunted the low sugar-induced increase in body size (Fig.  
192 3D), the magnitude of genotype effects on the increase in body size were larger in  
193 males for *dilp3* (sex:diet:genotype interaction:  $p=0.0003$ ), with a similar trend in *dilp2*  
194 (sex:diet:genotype interaction:  $p=0.0627$ ). Thus, we identify a male-biased requirement  
195 for several genes that influence IIS activity in regulating the low sugar-induced increase  
196 in body size, a finding that aligns with the male-specific increase in IIS activity in OS.

197 To determine the requirement for TOR in mediating the low sugar-induced  
198 increase in body size, we measured pupal volume in larvae heterozygous for a  
199 hypomorphic allele of *Target of rapamycin* (*Tor*; *Tor*<sup>ΔP</sup>/+) (Zhang et al., 2000). In *w*<sup>1118</sup>  
200 females, larvae reared on 0S were significantly larger than genotype-matched larvae  
201 raised on 1S (Fig. 3E); however, this low sugar-induced increase in body size was  
202 blunted in *Tor*<sup>ΔP</sup>/+ female larvae (Fig. 3E; genotype:diet interaction  $p<0.0001$ ). This  
203 suggests the low sugar-induced increase in TOR activity in females was required to  
204 achieve a larger body size. In *w*<sup>1118</sup> and *Tor*<sup>ΔP</sup>/+ males, pupal volume was significantly  
205 larger in larvae raised on 0S compared with genotype-matched larvae reared on 1S  
206 (Fig. 3F). While the low sugar-induced increase in body size was smaller in *Tor*<sup>ΔP</sup>/+  
207 males compared with controls (genotype:diet  $p<0.0001$ ), the magnitude of genotype  
208 effects on the body size response were larger in females than in males  
209 (sex:diet:genotype interaction ( $p=0.0303$ )). This reveals a previously unrecognized  
210 female-biased requirement for TOR activity in regulating body size in a low sugar  
211 context.

212

213 **A low sugar diet has sex-specific effects on metabolic gene expression and**  
214 **whole-body metabolism**

215

216 IIS and TOR promote increased body size by regulating diverse aspects of metabolism,  
217 (e.g. triglyceride storage, protein synthesis, glucose homeostasis) (Grewal, 2009;  
218 Musselman and Kühnlein, 2018; Teleman et al., 2008). We therefore measured mRNA  
219 levels of a selection of genes implicated in metabolic regulation. In *w<sup>1118</sup>* male and  
220 female larvae reared on 0S, we found significant changes to mRNA levels compared  
221 with larvae reared on 1S, many of which were sex-specific (Fig. 4A). For genes  
222 encoding proteins involved in fat metabolism, 9/14 and 5/14 genes showed low sugar-  
223 induced changes to mRNA levels in males and females, respectively (Fig. 4A). For  
224 genes encoding ribosomal proteins, which play integral roles in protein synthesis, 1/12  
225 and 6/12 genes showed low sugar-induced changes to mRNA levels in males and  
226 females, respectively (Fig. 4A). While this examination of mRNA levels includes only a  
227 fraction of genes that affect metabolism, this data suggests that a low sugar diet causes  
228 sex-biased changes to mRNA levels of metabolic genes.

229 To determine the physiological significance of these sex-biased changes in  
230 mRNA levels (Gershman et al., 2007; Li et al., 2006; Mattila and Hietakangas, 2017;  
231 Teleman et al., 2008; Zinke et al., 2002), we measured whole-body levels of several  
232 macronutrients in male and female larvae reared in 0S and 1S. In both male and female  
233 *w<sup>1118</sup>* larvae reared on 0S, triglyceride levels were significantly reduced compared with  
234 sex-matched larvae cultured on 1S (Fig. 4B). Thus, a low sugar diet reduced adiposity

235 in both sexes. In contrast,  $w^{1118}$  females reared in 0S had significantly higher protein  
236 levels (Fig. 4C), an effect that was not reproduced in  $w^{1118}$  males (Fig. 4C). This reveals  
237 a previously unrecognized sex difference in the regulation of whole-body protein in a  
238 low sugar context. While glucose levels were significantly higher in  $w^{1118}$  male and  
239 female larvae raised in 0S (Fig. 4D), the low sugar diet caused a male-specific increase  
240 in glycogen and trehalose (Fig. 4E, F). Thus, we observed both sex-specific and non-  
241 sex-specific alterations in whole-body carbohydrate levels in a low sugar context,  
242 highlighting the importance of including both sexes when studying diet-induced  
243 metabolic changes. Indeed, our findings suggest sugar-induced changes to  
244 carbohydrate metabolism found in previous studies were possibly driven by effects in  
245 males (Musselman et al., 2011; Pasco and Léopold, 2012).

246 In conclusion, our study adds to a growing literature showing sex-specific effects  
247 of dietary nutrients on phenotypes such as body size, metabolism, lifespan, and fertility  
248 (Green and Extavour, 2014; Hudry et al., 2019; Klepsat et al., 2020; Millington et al.,  
249 2021a; Regan et al., 2016; Wat et al., 2020). Because we show males and females  
250 activate distinct signaling pathways and exhibit sex-specific metabolic changes to  
251 achieve equivalent phenotypic outcomes, this suggests the absence of a sexually  
252 dimorphic phenotype in larval growth studies does not provide sufficient rationale for  
253 using single- or mixed-sex groups of animals. Instead, both sexes must be included to  
254 draw accurate conclusions regarding the signaling, metabolic, and body size effects of  
255 dietary nutrients.

256

257 **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

258

259 **Data availability.** Original images of pupae are available upon request. Raw values for  
260 all data collected and displayed in this manuscript are available in Supplementary File 1.  
261 All data necessary for confirming the conclusions of the article are present within the  
262 article, figures, tables, and supplementary files.

263

264 **Fly husbandry.** Our 1S diet consists of 20.5 g/L sucrose, 70.9 g/L D-glucose, 48.5 g/L  
265 cornmeal, 45.3 g/L yeast, 4.55 g/L agar, 0.5g CaCl<sub>2</sub>•2H<sub>2</sub>O, 0.5 g MgSO<sub>4</sub>•7H<sub>2</sub>O, 11.77  
266 mL acid mix (propionic acid/phosphoric acid). Our 0S diet consists of 48.5 g/L cornmeal,  
267 45.3 g/L yeast, 4.55 g/L agar, 0.5g CaCl<sub>2</sub>•2H<sub>2</sub>O, 0.5 g MgSO<sub>4</sub>•7H<sub>2</sub>O, 11.77 mL acid  
268 mix. Details of 0.75S, 0.5S, and 0.25S diets can be found in Supplementary file 2.  
269 Larvae were raised at a density of 50 animals per 10 mL food at 25°C, and sexed by  
270 gonad size. Adult flies were maintained at a density of twenty flies per vial in single-sex  
271 groups.

272

273 **Fly strains.** The following fly strains from the Bloomington *Drosophila* Stock Center  
274 were used: *w*<sup>1118</sup> (#3605), *InR*<sup>E19</sup> (#9646), *Tor*<sup>AP</sup> (#7014). Additional fly strains include:  
275 *dilp2*, *dilp3*, and *dilp5* (Grönke et al., 2010). All fly strains were backcrossed for at least  
276 6 generations, in addition to extensive prior backcrossing (Grönke et al., 2010;  
277 Millington et al., 2021a,b).

278

279 **Body size.** Pupal volume and adult weight were measured as previously described  
280 (Delanoue et al., 2010; Millington et al., 2021a; Millington et al., 2021b; Rideout et al.,  
281 2015).

282

283 **Feeding behaviour.** Feeding behavior was quantified as number of mouth-hook  
284 contractions per 30 s.

285

286 **Developmental timing.** Time to pupariation was measured as previously described  
287 (Millington et al., 2021a). Time to 50% pupariation was calculated per replicate and  
288 used for quantification and statistical analysis.

289

290 **Metabolism assays.** Each biological replicate consists of ten female or male larvae.  
291 Larvae were frozen on dry ice, and homogenized for lipid, protein, glucose, glycogen,  
292 and trehalose assays. All assays were performed as described in Tennessen et al.  
293 (2014) and Wat et al. (2020).

294

295 **RNA extraction and cDNA synthesis.** RNA extraction and cDNA synthesis were  
296 performed as previously described (Marshall et al., 2012; Rideout et al., 2012; Rideout  
297 et al., 2015; Wat et al., 2020). Briefly, each biological replicate consists of ten *w<sup>1118</sup>*  
298 larvae frozen on dry ice and stored at -80°C. Each experiment contained 3-4 biological  
299 replicates per sex, and each experiment was performed at least twice. RNA was  
300 extracted using 500 µl Trizol (Thermo Fisher Scientific: #15596018) and precipitated  
301 using isopropanol and 75% ethanol. Pelleted RNA was resuspended in 200 µl molecular

302 biology grade water (Corning, 46-000-CV) and stored at -80°C until use. For cDNA  
303 synthesis, an equal volume of RNA per reaction was DNase-treated and reverse  
304 transcribed using the QuantiTect Reverse Transcription Kit (Qiagen, 205314).

305

306 **Quantitative real-time PCR (qPCR).** qPCR was performed as previously described  
307 (Marshall et al., 2012; Rideout et al., 2012; Rideout et al., 2015; Wat et al., 2020).  
308 Primer list in Supplementary file 3.

309

310 **Preparation of protein samples, SDS-PAGE, and Western blotting.** Samples were  
311 generated as previously described (Millington et al., 2021a). 20 µg of protein was  
312 loaded per lane, separated on a 12% SDS-PAGE gel in SDS running buffer, and  
313 transferred onto a nitrocellulose membrane (Bio-Rad) for 2 hr at 40 V on ice.  
314 Membranes were incubated for 24 hr in blocking buffer at 4°C (5% milk or 5% BSA in  
315 TBST 0.1%) and subsequently incubated with primary antibodies overnight at 4°C. Anti-  
316 pS6k (#9209, Cell Signaling), and anti-Actin (#8432, Santa Cruz) were used at 1:1000.  
317 After 3 x 2 min washes in 0.1% TBST, HRP-conjugated secondary antibodies were  
318 used at 1:5000 for pS6k (#65–6120; Invitrogen) and 1:3000 for actin (#7076; Cell  
319 Signaling). Membranes were washed (3 x 2 min, 2 x 15min) in 0.1% TBST, washed 1 x  
320 5 min in TBS, and finally Pierce ECL was applied as per manufacturer's instructions  
321 (#32134, Thermo Scientific).

322

323 **Statistical analysis.** GraphPad Prism (GraphPad Prism version 8.4.3 for Mac OS X)  
324 was used for all statistical tests, and for figure preparation. Full details of statistical tests  
325 and *p*-values are listed in Supplementary file 4.

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327

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507

508 **FIGURE LEGENDS**

509

510 **Figure 1. A low sugar diet promotes an increased rate of growth and final body**  
511 **size.** (A) Pupal volume in  $w^{1118}$  females cultured on 1S, 0.75S, 0.5S, 0.25S, and 0S. (B)  
512 Pupal volume in  $w^{1118}$  males cultured on 1S, 0.75S, 0.5S, 0.25S, and 0S. (C) Reaction  
513 norms for pupal volume in both sexes plotted using 1S and 0S data from A and B. (D)  
514 Adult weight in  $w^{1118}$  female and male flies reared on 1S and 0S. (E, F) Time to  
515 pupariation in  $w^{1118}$  females cultured on 1S, 0.75S, 0.5S, 0.25S, and 0S. (G, H) Time to  
516 pupariation in  $w^{1118}$  males cultured on 1S, 0.75S, 0.5S, 0.25S, and 0S. \* p<0.05; \*\*  
517 p<0.01; \*\*\* p<0.001; \*\*\*\* p<0.0001; ns indicates not significant; error bars indicate SEM;  
518 dashed lines indicate 95% confidence interval. p-values, samples sizes, and statistical  
519 tests are in Supplementary file 4.

520

521 **Figure 2. A low sugar diet has sex-biased effects on insulin/insulin-like growth**  
522 **factor (IIS) and target of rapamycin (TOR) signaling.** (A) mRNA levels of Foxo target  
523 genes (*InR*, *bmm*, and *4E-BP*) in female larvae reared on 1S or 0S. (B) mRNA levels of  
524 Foxo target genes in male larvae reared on 1S or 0S. (C) Mouth-hook contractions in  
525  $w^{1118}$  female and male larvae raised on 1S or 0S. (D) mRNA levels of *NLaz* and *puc* in  
526 female larvae raised in 1S or 0S. (E) mRNA levels of *NLaz* and *puc* in male larvae  
527 raised in 1S or 0S. (F) Levels of phosphorylated S6 kinase (pS6k) in females and males  
528 raised in 1S or 0S. \*\* p<0.01; \*\*\* p<0.001; ns indicates not significant; error bars  
529 indicate SEM. p-values, samples sizes, and statistical tests are in Supplementary file 4.

530

531 **Figure 3. Sex-biased requirement for IIS, *Drosophila* insulin-like peptides, and**  
532 **target of rapamycin (TOR) in promoting the low sugar-induced increase in body**  
533 **size.** (A) Pupal volume in  $w^{1118}$  and  $InR^{E19/+}$  males cultured on 1S or 0S. (B) Pupal  
534 volume in  $w^{1118}$  and  $InR^{E19/+}$  females cultured on 1S or 0S. (C) Pupal volume in  $w^{1118}$ ,  
535  $dilp2$  mutant,  $dilp3$  mutant, and  $dilp5$  mutant males reared on 1S or 0S. (D) Pupal  
536 volume in  $w^{1118}$ ,  $dilp2$  mutant,  $dilp3$  mutant, and  $dilp5$  mutant females reared on 1S or  
537 0S. (E) Pupal volume in  $w^{1118}$  and  $Tor^{\Delta P/+}$  females cultured on 1S or 0S. (F) Pupal  
538 volume in  $w^{1118}$  and  $Tor^{\Delta P/+}$  males cultured on 1S or 0S. \* p<0.05; \*\*\* p<0.001; \*\*\*\*  
539 p<0.0001; ns indicates not significant; error bars indicate SEM. p-values, samples sizes,  
540 and statistical tests are in Supplementary file 4. Note: parallel collection of multiple  
541 genotypes and diets means that  $w^{1118}$  control data in 0S and 1S are the same in Fig.  
542 1A, B, 3A-D.

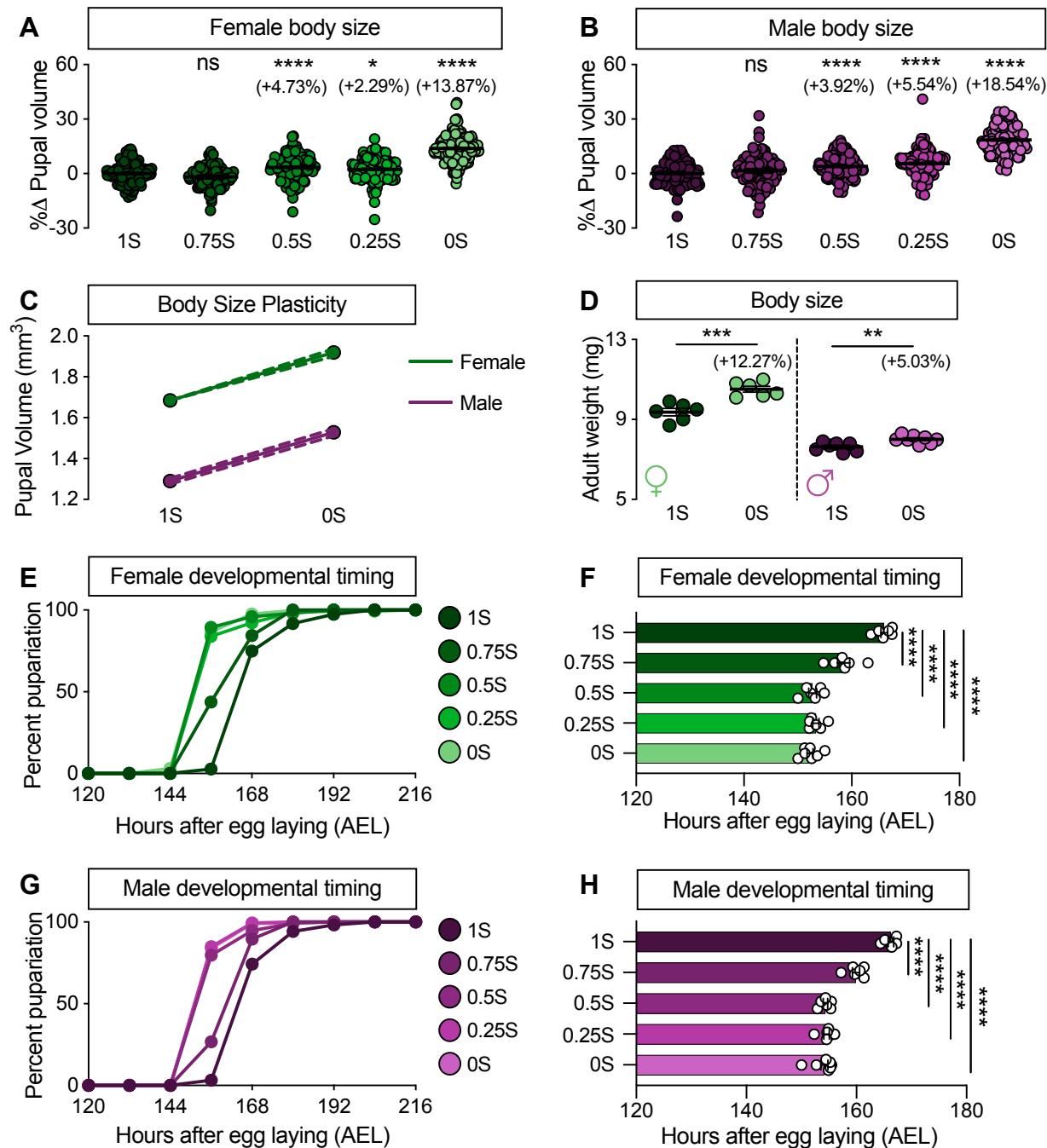
543  
544 **Figure 4. A low sugar diet has sex-biased effects on metabolic gene expression**  
545 **and metabolism.** (A) mRNA levels of metabolic genes in  $w^{1118}$  male and female larvae  
546 raised on 1S or 0S. (B) Whole-body triglyceride levels in  $w^{1118}$  female and male larvae  
547 reared on 1S or 0S. (C) Whole-body protein levels in  $w^{1118}$  female and male larvae  
548 raised on 1S or 0S. (D) Whole-body glucose levels in  $w^{1118}$  female and male larvae  
549 cultured on 1S or 0S. (E) Whole-body glycogen levels in  $w^{1118}$  female and male larvae  
550 reared on 1S or 0S. (F) Whole-body trehalose levels in  $w^{1118}$  female and male larvae  
551 cultured on 1S or 0S. \*\*\* p<0.001; \*\*\*\* p<0.0001; ns indicates not significant; error bars  
552 indicate SEM. p-values, samples sizes, and statistical tests are in Supplementary file 4.

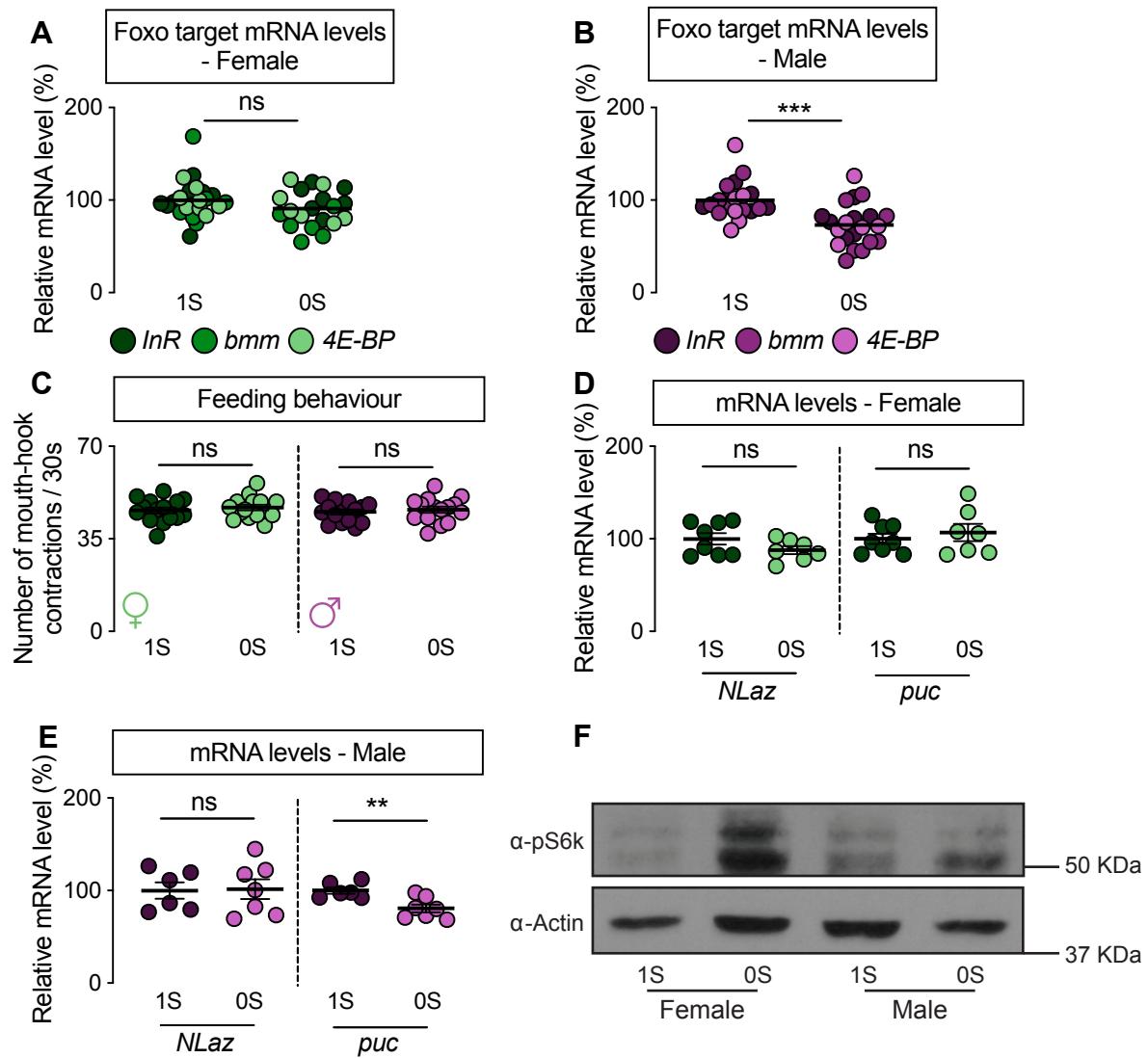
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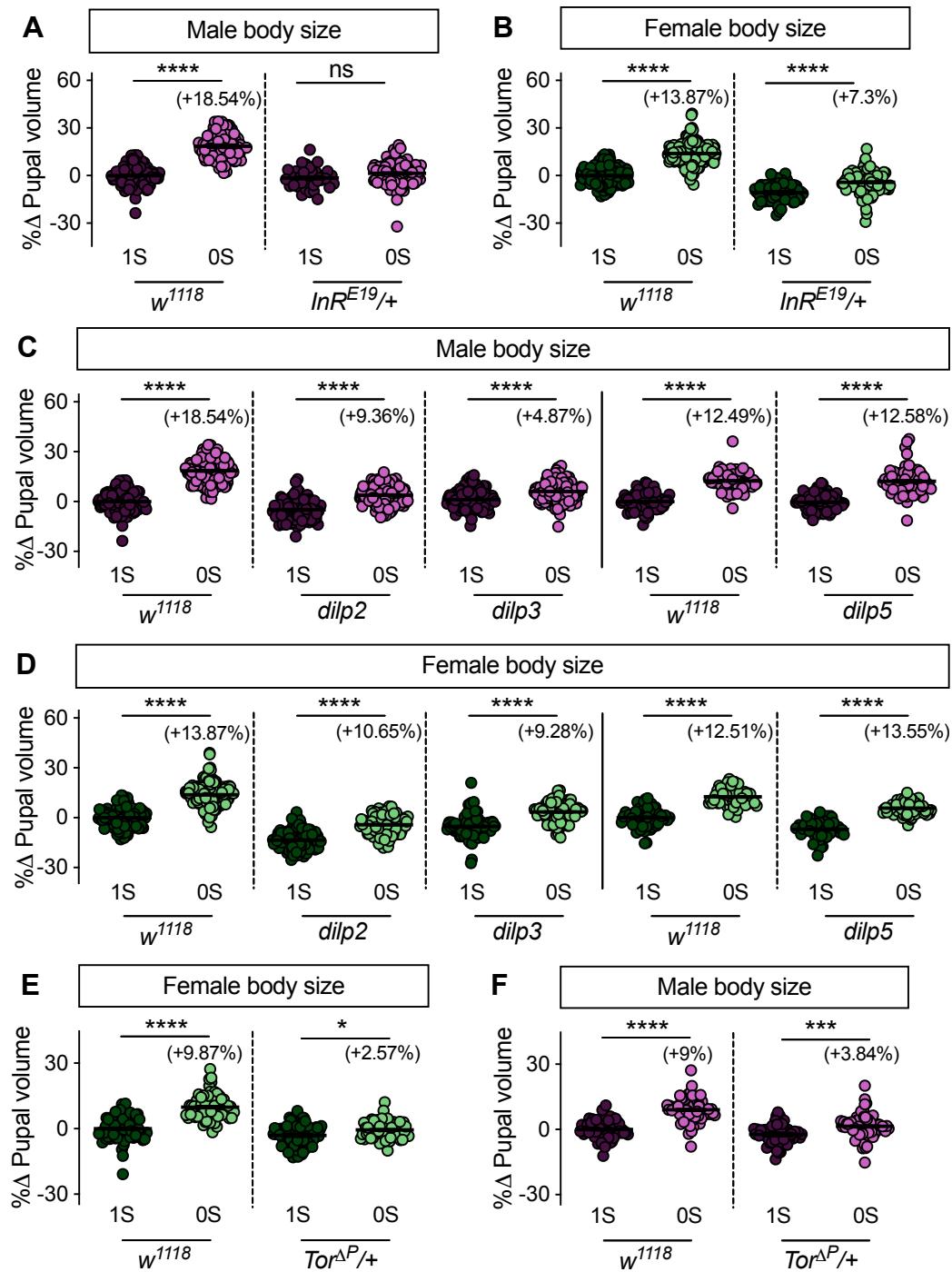
554 **Figure S1. A low sugar diet has sex-biased effects on target of rapamycin (TOR)**

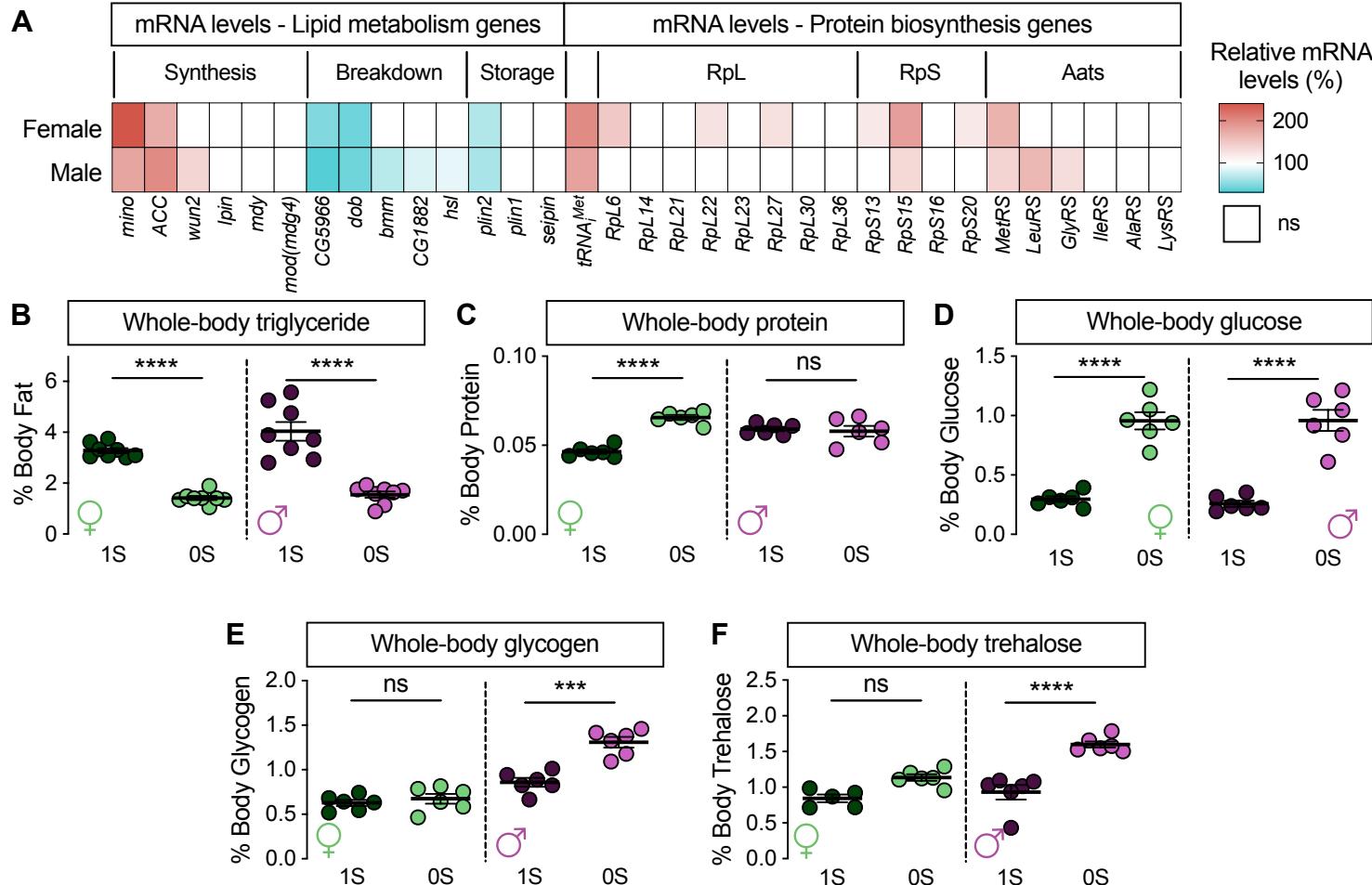
555 **signaling.** (A) Levels of pS6k in females and males raised in 1S or 0S.

556

**Figure 1.**

**Figure 2.**

**Figure 3.**

**Figure 4.**

# Figure S1.

**A**

