

# Study finds meal replacements aid weight loss

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Meal replacements in a medically supervised weight loss program are successful in facilitating weight loss, according to a new study conducted at the University of Kentucky. The study appears in the August 2009 issue of the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*.

The meal replacements are products of Health Management Resources Corporation (HMR), a privately owned national health care company specializing in [weight loss](#) and weight management.

The study assessed weight outcomes, behavioral data and side effects for obese patients enrolled in an intensive behavioral weight loss program. Two treatment options were offered, Medically Supervised and Healthy Solutions. Medically Supervised patients restricted [food consumption](#) to meal replacements, which consisted of shakes and entrees, and bars. Patients either consumed five shakes daily or three shakes and two shelf-stable entrees daily.

Healthy Solutions patients limited food intake to shakes, entrees, bars, fruit and vegetables. Recommendations were to consume a minimum of three shakes, two entrees and five servings of fruit and vegetables daily. Some patients with diabetes, hypertension or medical problems necessitated the Medically Supervised option. Patients in the Medically Supervised option lost an average of 43.4 pounds in 19 weeks. Patients in the Healthy Solutions option lost an average of 37.5 pounds in 18 weeks. The study also found that patient compliance, accountability and commitment with the support of a structured program increases weight

loss success.

The study's co-author, Dr. James W. Anderson, professor emeritus of internal medicine and clinical nutrition at the University of Kentucky College of Medicine, said the gold standard for weight loss by the health community is a 5 to 10 percent loss of initial [body weight](#). "This study showed a loss of 16.4 percent of initial body weight in the Medically Supervised group and a loss of 15.8 percent of initial body weight in the Healthy Solutions group, both well above the gold standard the health community considers successful and when health improvements are seen."

Source: University of Kentucky

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