

# Personality traits influencing weight loss

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Being too optimistic could harm weight loss efforts. Research published in BioMed Central's open access journal, *BioPsychoSocial Medicine*, reveals the psychological characteristics that may contribute to weight loss.

Hitomi Saito from Doshisha University, Japan, worked with a team of researchers to psychologically profile 101 obese patients undergoing combined counselling, nutrition and exercise therapy at the Kansai Medical University Hospital Obesity Clinic over a period of 6 months. Patients' psychosocial characteristics before and after attending the clinic were assessed using psychological questionnaires designed to identify patients' personality types. Patients who were able to improve their self-awareness through counselling were more likely to lose weight than those who were not. Optimism and self-orientation characteristics improved for most patients after the 6-month program, although this was not related to [weight loss](#). In fact, patients who started the program with high levels of self-orientation and optimistic characteristics were less likely to lose weight.

This result supports previous findings that some negative emotion has a positive effect on behavior modification because patients care more about their disease. However, the overall improvement in optimistic ego state is not necessarily detrimental, as this increased optimism should result in patients maintaining the healthy lifestyle achieved at the clinic.

"It is important to enhance patients' self-effectiveness and self-control in order to reduce [psychological stress](#) and to maintain the weight loss",

state the authors, however they are careful to stress that; "The weight loss should be attributed not simply to the intervention of the clinical psychologists but to the total effect of the intervention of a holistic medical care team."

More information: Psychological factors that promote behavior modification by obese patients; Hitomi Saito, Yutaka Kimura, Sawako Tashima, Nana Takao, Akinori Nakagawa, Takanobu Baba and Suguru Sato; *BioPsychoSocial Medicine* (in press); [www.bpsmedicine.com/](http://www.bpsmedicine.com/)

Source: BioMed Central ([news](#) : [web](#))

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