

# Health-centered weight control method shows promise

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Most weight-control strategies emphasize energy-restricted diets and increased physical activity - and most are not effective over the long term. In a study of a "weight-acceptance" intervention, published in the November 2009 issue of the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, researchers found that there could be long-term beneficial effects on certain eating behaviors using a weight- acceptance intervention approach.

In a shift from the traditional "weight-centered" approach to a more "health-centered" approach, a new weight paradigm called "Health-At-Every-Size" (HAES) argues that health is related to behaviors independently of body weight status. HAES approaches do not focus on weight loss and instead focus on a healthy lifestyle with an emphasis on size acceptance and non-dieting.

In a study conducted by researchers from Laval University, Quebec ,144 pre-menopausal, overweight/obese women (48 in the HAES group, 48 in a Social Support (SS) group and 48 in the control group) participated in a randomized controlled trial. Measurements of eating behaviors, appetite sensations, physical activities, metabolic and anthropometric profiles were made at the beginning of the study, at the end of the intervention period, and at 6 months and 1 year post-intervention.

It was found that [food intake](#) in response to feelings and perceptions of hunger were significantly lower at 1-y follow-up in both the HAES and SS groups when compared to the control group. In addition, situational

susceptibility to disinhibition (overconsumption of food in response to a variety of stimuli associated with a loss of control on food intake) was significantly lower at 1-y follow-up in the HAES group than in the control group.

Writing in the article, Simone Lemieux, RD PhD, Professor, Institute of Nutraceuticals and Functional Foods, Laval University, states, "Overall, these results suggest that, when compared to a control group, a HAES approach could have beneficial effects on eating behaviors related to disinhibition and hunger, these behavioral changes being related to a better body weight maintenance. However, the present study did not show distinctive effects of the HAES approach in comparison to a SS intervention"

More information: The article is "'Health-At-Every-Size' and Eating Behaviors: One-Year Follow-Up Results of a Size Acceptance Intervention" by Véronique Provencher, RD PhD, Catherine Bégin, PhD, Angelo Tremblay, PhD, Lyne Mongeau, RD PhD, Louise Corneau, RD MSc, Sylvie Dodin, MD MSc, Sonia Boivin, PhD, and Simone Lemieux, RD PhD. It appears in the [Journal of the American Dietetic Association](#), Volume 109 Issue 11 (November 2009), published by Elsevier.

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