

Obesity: Conclusive results for the Montreal Heart Institute's Kilo-Actif program

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A program which combines interval training and healthy eating practices seems to be perfectly indicated for those suffering from obesity, according to the results of a new study from the Montreal Heart Institute's centre for preventive medicine and physical activity (ÉPIC Centre). Results of the study were announced at the National Obesity Summit, currently taking place in Montreal.

Within the framework of this study, researchers analyzed the track record of 62 participants in Kilo-Actif, a 9-month program intended for obesity sufferers that focuses on weight loss and maintenance. The study showed significant improvements in participants' body mass, waist circumference, body mass index and effort capacity. The results are especially encouraging because on average participants lost 5.5% of their body mass, reduced their waist circumference by 5.15% and increased their effort capacity by 15%. Beyond weight loss, participants also saw a 7% decrease in bad cholesterol (LDL) as well as an 8% increase in good cholesterol (HDL).

Offered at ÉPIC Centre and overseen by physicians, kinesiologists and nutritionists, Kilo-Actif is a program which aims at modifying eating habits and promoting an active lifestyle through education on healthy practices. During the course of the program, participants commit to taking part each week in two or three supervised training sessions of 60 minutes each. Participants are also invited to five face-to-face meetings and two group meetings with a dietitian where the basis of the Mediterranean diet and nutritional rules are explained.

"It has been clearly demonstrated that [obesity](#) increases the risk of health problems, particularly of cardiovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes, stroke, hypertension and certain types of cancer," explains Dr. Martin Juneau, Director of Prevention at the Montreal Heart Institute and Director of ÉPIC Centre. "A program like Kilo-Actif, which combines [interval training](#) with healthy eating, is therefore perfectly indicated because we know that a decrease in body mass can lower the risk factors associated with cardiovascular disease."

"Kilo-Actif's success is largely based on the adoption of an interval training program," adds Valérie Guilbault, an ÉPIC Centre kinesiologist who oversaw the training of the participants. "It is proven that, compared to moderate-intensity continuous training, interval training is more appreciated by participants. This type of training is also more effective, because alternating between short periods of intense effort and rest periods allows for a longer training time."

Training as a fun activity

Inactive for several years because of health troubles, Marie-Josée Desjardins had difficulty just carrying out regular everyday activities, like going up stairs or doing her shopping. Determined to take charge of her life, she decided to join the Kilo-Actif program. Two years later and weighing 40 pounds less, she does not want to go back to the way things were because she can't imagine living without that great sense of well-being she feels today. "Kilo-Actif not only gave me the discipline, but also the taste for training. Now, I can't last the week without putting in at least three high intensity sessions during that time," she explains.

More information: www.centreepic.org/

Provided by Montreal Heart Institute

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